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THE

POEMS OF GRAY

EDITED BY

HENRY REED.

SHEEP'S BRIDGE,

Eton Playing Fields

PHILADELPHIA.

HENRY CAREY BAIRD.

[SUCCESSOR TO E.L. CAREY.]

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

THOMAS GRAY.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. W. RADCLYFFE.

EDITED, WITH A MEMOIR,

By HENRY REED,

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF PENNSYLVANIA.

PHILADELPHIA:
HENRY CAREY BAIRD,
SUCCESSOR TO E. L. CAREY.
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TO

JAMES T. FIELDS,

OF BOSTON,

THIS EDITION OF THE POETICAL WORKS OF GRAY

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH FEELINGS OF FRIENDSHIP AND ADMIRATION,

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS volume has been prepared for the purpose of offering to the public an edition of the poetical works of Gray, which may not only prove attractive by the embellishments of art, but also, by the completeness of the collection and the accuracy of the text, commend itself as a standard edition. To the poet's genius, the tribute of earnest and studious editorship has been so well rendered by the scholars of his own country, that it becomes an American editor's first duty to acknowledge his obligations to them—Mason, Wakefield, Mathias, and above all the Rev. John Mitford, the latest and a living editor, whose elaborate and long-continued research seems to have left nothing more to be gleaned for acquaintance with the life and character of Gray, or the illustration of his writings. Pains have been taken to improve the opportunities, which now exist, of making this the most complete collection of Gray's

poems which has yet appeared. The text, which, with some few and not important exceptions, has been followed, is that given by Mr. Mitford in the Aldine edition.

A new arrangement of the poems is made. In this particular, no edition has the poet's own authority, not only, because a good many of the poems are posthumous, but because some which appeared in his lifetime were not introduced into his own collections. In this edition, the poems are divided into those which were published during Gray's life, and the Posthumous pieces,—with subdivisions of each of these two classes into the original poems, English and Latin, and the Translations. In each subdivision, the poems are arranged according to the dates of composition, as far as they could be determined.

The notes are placed in an appendix, so as not to encumber the text, and have been selected with a view to avoid needless annotation, and at the same time to comprehend all that is requisite to illustrate the poems. Gray's own notes are all given, and indicated by his name. The other notes are chiefly Mr. Mitford's; a few introduced in this edition are indicated by the initial letter *R.*

Philadelphia.

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MEMOIR

OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF

GRAY.

Gray

MEMOIR OF GRAY.

THIS sketch of the life and writings of the poet Gray may be introduced, not inappositely it is believed, by the mention of an early proof of the power of his poetry, by which his name has become associated with that of one of the most illustrious of England's soldiers, and with a glorious page in her annals.

On the 13th of September, 1759, a day which proved fatal to French dominion on the continent of America, and which gave to Wolfe at once death and an undying name, as the conqueror of Canada,—when the embarkation of the British army took place to effect a landing beneath the Heights of Abraham, the English general led the way in

an enterprise, planned as the last hope of victory over Montcalm in his almost impregnable position. A little after midnight, the flowing tide of the St. Lawrence bore the boats, freighted with an army, along to a destination dark as the night that hid them from the enemy's sentinels on the shore. The darkness of the hour and of a clouded sky disclosed no more than the dim outline of the hostile heights of the citadel of Quebec and of the Castle of St. Louis; there was silence deep as the darkness, for safety and success depended on secresy; and no sound was heard save the rippling of the river. It was at such a moment and in such a situation that in hushed tones, just audible to the officers in his boat, the voice of Wolfe murmured over the stanzas with which a country churchyard had inspired the muse of Gray; and as the last line, which speaks of

"The bosom of his Father and his God"

died away upon the soldier's lips, (lips which in a few hours were to close over life's last utterance in the placid content of a victor's death,) he added,

"Now, gentlemen, I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec!"

This pleasing and pathetic incident was preserved in the memory of the late Professor Robison of Edinburgh, who, in youth, had been in military service, and was present in the boat with Wolfe: and now history has made the tradition her own. Lord Mahon, the historian, after narrating it, observes: "One noble line,

'The paths of glory lead but to the grave,'

must have seemed, at such a moment, fraught with a mournful meaning."

No finer tribute was ever paid to poetic power: in its simple sublimity, it is worthy to take its place beside the classic story of the homage which the Macedonian conqueror rendered to the genius of the great lyrical poet of Greece. It occurred when "The Elegy" was comparatively a new poem, the date of its publication being about nine years before; and it was when Gray was a living author. The story has a double and a reflex interest in its connection both with the poet and the soldier. The enthusiasm with which Wolfe spoke of the poem

tells of the poet's power and of his own susceptibility.

A frame, constitutionally feeble, had been prostrated by the cares of the campaign and the command of a disheartened army; and it was in the scarce recruited strength of convalescence that the attack on Quebec was planned: then it was, just as the enterprise hung on the crisis of achievement or disaster, and the silent midnight floating on the tide of the St. Lawrence gave a momentary inaction—a brief pause for pensiveness,—that the poet's words rose up in the soldier's memory, brought there, it may be, by mysterious forebodings of death, and associations with the far-off English churchyards and the tranquil beauty of the rural atmosphere that hung over them. How must the poem have sounded over the soldier's soul, like sweet and solemn music, deepening his placid and heroic self-possession, which was soon to be followed by the no less characteristic ardour wherewith he led his army up the cliffs to their battle-ground, and then the repose of tranquil consciousness of the coming of death! What a proof of the magic that dwells in the words and the music of a true poet!

This incident has been referred to as one of the earliest and most impressive proofs of that pathetic power with which, by a single poem, Gray has moved the hearts of all who recognise with him kindred associations with Christian burial-places. And so, year after year, for a century, has this poem endeared its author to many a reader, making his imagery and words familiar as any in English verse. It is one of the rare instances of a single and short poem proving a foundation deep and broad enough to build a poet's fame on. It is the production first thought of when the name of Gray is mentioned, and it has made him eminently the elegiac poet of English literature.

The story of the life of Gray is a short and simple one, for it was a life of secluded studiousness, spent in the companionship of books and of the productions of art—painting, architecture, and sculpture, and in communion with nature. His living companionship was with a few of his kindred who were dear to him, or to whom he was dutiful, and with a few choice friends with whom he found sympathy.

THOMAS GRAY was born in Cornhill, London, on the 26th of December, 1716. His father, Mr. Philip Gray, was a citizen and money-scrivener of London, and his mother's maiden name was Antrobus. The poet was their fifth child, and the only one of twelve children who lived beyond infancy. It was by the mother's ready courage that his life was saved from the constitutional malady which proved so fatal to her offspring, and which she warded off in him, in the paroxysm of the attack, by opening a vein with her own hand. It was moreover by that mother's unfailing fortitude and affection that the life thus saved was made fit for all that gave it happiness and honour. The father's character stands in dark contrast, which it might perhaps be well to touch on with reserve rather than to bring into painful prominence, were it not that such reserve would be injustice to the wife and mother, whose womanly virtues had the stern nurture of the misery of a husband's cruelties. Philip Gray was an improvident, selfish, morose, and passionate man, the excesses of whose temper stopped not short of acts of brutal violence, which made him the terror of his household, and drove

the wife of his bosom from under his roof to seek in the law of the land shelter for her person and her life. The extent of the wife's sufferings, and of the exertions and sacrifices made by her for the good of her son, was not fully known until, a few years ago, there came to light a manuscript document, containing the statement of a case, and the opinion of an eminent civilian in Doctors' Commons, dated in 1735, when the solitary surviving child of this unhappy marriage had nearly reached the years of manhood. From these papers it appears, that Dorothy Antrobus had, for some ten years before her marriage with Philip Gray, been engaged in trade (the sale of China wares) with a brother and sister, by which means she had laid up a small property of a few hundred pounds. Before the marriage, Philip Gray agreed that this property should continue as his wife's stock in trade, and that the profits should accrue to her sole benefit. For twenty years and more was the business continued; and thus, by womanly thrift and industry, was the wife and mother enabled to do what the husband and father's extravagance and heartlessness would have left undone. It was the wife who

provided apparel for herself and for her children, and furniture for their dwelling-place; and, what gives more lasting interest to this story of domestic infelicity, it was the mother who gave the son an education, and in so doing gave to him the power of fame, and to the world the imperishable delight of his lays. For her son's expenses at Eton and at Cambridge the mother made provision. Growing necessitous in consequence of rash expenditures, the husband grasped at the property which the marriage contract had set aside, and sought by ill treatment to compel the wife to withdraw it from the uses it had long been appropriated to. In seeking professional advice, she set forth her grievances,—long-endured and in the brutal form of abusive language and bodily violence; but she also affirmed a resolute purpose. "These" (such was her language) "she was resolved, if possible, to bear: not to leave her shop of trade, for the sake of her son, to be able to assist in the maintenance of him at the University, since his father won't."

The mother's heart did not fail her; and thus a woman's love and fortitude rescued what the father's cruelty would have cast away. The father of Mil-

ton, like the father of Gray, was a London scrivener, but the parallel stops there. If, as there is some reason to infer, the elder Milton would have guided his son into some lucrative calling, he appreciated the genius of that son, and gave it the largest culture; and no piece of Milton's sets the characters of both in more pleasing and graceful light than the Latin poem in which such genuine poetry is inspired by filial piety and gratitude. To Gray, maternal love and womanly sagacity supplied what a father's wise and dutiful affection gave to Milton. A closer parallel to the circumstances of Gray's boyhood may be found in the story of the early years of a later and less renowned poet, Henry Kirke White, whose gentle spirit in childhood, animated with the purest poetic aspirations, was saved by a mother's zeal from the gross and uncongenial occupation to which the father's harder spirit of calculation would have doomed him.

For one whose moral constitution was by nature framed with exquisite delicacy, a childhood and youth such as Gray's were most unpropitious. Domestic discord, the knowledge and often the sight of conjugal cruelty and misery, a father's wrongs

and a mother's sufferings, could not but affect a spirit naturally sensitive, with a gloom which the after years would never do away with. It was a state of things which was witnessed by Gray in childhood, in boyhood, and in early manhood; and doubtless it gave a colour to his whole life, tinging it with that pensiveness which often darkened yet deeper into morbid sensitiveness and despondency. Gray never could have known a happy family-home: and hence an influence on his character and his career, which his biographers have hardly represented in its full effect. If the heart of childhood is easily diverted from its sorrows, and happy in the perpetual wealth of its "new-born blisses;" yet is it capable of sharp though short agonies, more so than adult wisdom is willing to take heed of; and what worse or more wasting misery could there be to a young and thoughtful spirit, than the unnatural conflict of filial piety! Gray felt the cruel wrong which robs childhood of the rightful property of its innocence, the happiness, which, in after-years too, comes again with its glad memories to soothe and cheer and refresh the severer condition of adult and even aged humanity.

A cloud that hangs over early life casts a long shadow: it travels onward with the life, ever and anon, fitfully or habitually obscuring it with gloom and despondency,—a moodiness which is perhaps unconscious memory of the past. It is a grievous poverty which comes from the loss of the recollection of a cheerful childhood. When, twelve years after the death of this father, Gray wrote to his friend Mason, to condole with him on the loss of his father; after alluding to some improper disposal of his property by the elder Mason, he says: "I must (if you will suffer me to say so) call it great weakness; and yet, perhaps, your affection for him is heightened by that very weakness: for I know it is possible to feel an additional sorrow for the faults of those we have loved, even when that fault has been greatly injurious to ourselves."

The excellent education which was secured to Gray by his mother's firmness and industry, began at Eton, where he was placed under the care of a maternal uncle, an assistant in that great school of England's youth. His biographers have not stated at what age Gray's residence at Eton began; it was a removal from home that placed him, at least

for a season, out of sight of the worst form of household unhappiness that could sadden and shock the heart of a sensitive child: it laid the ground-work of that fine scholarship which distinguished both his studies and his writings through life. At Eton his acquaintance with Horace Walpole began, and that more congenial intimacy with Richard West, (a grandson of Bishop Burnet,) whose death was one of Gray's early sorrows.

An Eton school-mate, Jacob Bryant, has recorded, after a lapse of near seventy years, his recollections of Gray's manners in youth; and the manifestation, then, of that fastidious delicacy which always clung to him, shows how completely "the child was father of the man." "At this early time," (1729,) he writes, "Mr. Gray was in mourning for his uncle, Mr. Antrobus, who had been an assistant at Eton, and after his resignation lived and died there. I remember he made an elegant little figure in his sable dress, for he had a very good complexion and fine hair, and appeared to much advantage among the boys who were near him in the school, and who were rough and rude. Indeed, both Mr. Gray and his friend (Walpole) were looked upon as too

delicate, upon which account they had few associates, and never engaged in any exercise, nor partook of any boyish amusement. Hence they seldom were in the fields, at least they took only a distant view of those who pursued their different diversions. Some, therefore, who were severe, treated them as feminine characters, on account of their too great delicacy, and sometimes a too fastidious behaviour."

A fragment of one of Gray's school-compositions in Latin verse clung to the memory of his school-mate for threescore years and more. "One," he says, "I recollect, was upon the old story of words freezing in northern air, which he made when he was rather low in the fifth form; but I can only call to mind part of two verses, upon the consequences of the supposed thaw:—

'pluviæque loquaces
Descendere jugis, et garrulus ingruit imber.'"

The poet's Eton-life is, however, rendered memorable chiefly by that true lyrical poem, which, after years of absence, the sight of the home of his studious boyhood, with all its associations, inspired. The ode on a "Distant Prospect of Eton College"

was composed in 1742, and published in 1747: being the first publication of his English verse, it may be regarded as the beginning of his career as an English poet. Besides the personal and local interest that attaches to it, the poem bears the impress of high imaginative truth, not least in the poetic expression of some of the emotions with which we look back to the scenes and days of early life: in this it is always sure of a response from the common heart of man. The closing lines have become one of the most familiar quotations from English poetry. It is a retrospect filled with the poet's characteristic pensiveness: it is poetic truth in one of its sad aspects, which might be curiously and instructively compared with the bolder and more healthful view of human life given by Southey in his "Retrospect," and with Wordsworth's sublimer meditations on childhood.

In 1734 Gray left Eton for Cambridge, and in his nineteenth year was admitted a pensioner at Peter House, where he continued till 1738. During his college residence, his first poetical production was the Latin verses, composed as a college exercise in 1736, on the marriage of Frederick,

Prince of Wales,—that marriage which in the sequel became connected with so much of the disgraceful discord which existed between George the Second and his son. In the early part of the same year, when about twenty years old, Gray made what is believed to have been his first attempt in English verse: this was a translation of a part of the sixth book of the Thebaid. Writing to his friend, in May, 1736, he says: "For this little while past, I have been playing with Statius: we yesterday had a game at quoits together; you will easily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I send you my translation, which I did not engage in because I liked that part of the poem; nor do I now send it to you because I think it deserves it, but merely to show you how I mis-spend my days." This translation consisted of one hundred and ten lines: Mason selected twenty-seven lines as a specimen of Gray's first English versification, and to show how much at that early period he had imbibed of Dryden's spirited manner. Gray retained through life a high admiration of Dryden's poetry, as was strongly expressed when he had occasion to counsel a younger

poet. Writing to Beattie, in 1765, he adds this emphatic postscript to his letter: "P. S. Remember Dryden, and be blind to all his faults." And in conversation, he told Beattie "that if there was any excellence in his own numbers, he had learned it wholly from that great poet; and pressed him with great earnestness to study him, as his choice of words and versification were singularly happy and harmonious." In 1737, the Latin verses entitled "Luna Habitabilis" were composed also as a college exercise. In June, 1738, in a Latin letter to West, the "Favonius" of his Latin correspondence, he addressed the Sapphic Ode to his friend, and the Alcaic fragment "O lachrymarum fons." Of the ode, Mason in his biography said, "I choose to consider this delicate Sapphic Ode the first original production of Mr. Gray's muse; for verses imposed either by schoolmasters or tutors ought not, I think, to be taken into consideration. There is seldom a verse that flows well from the pen of a real poet if it does not flow voluntarily." Having begun, while at Cambridge, the study of the Italian language, he made a translation of part of the fourteenth Canto of Tasso's

"Gerusalemme Liberata," and also what, in a letter to West in 1738, he calls "a loose version of that scene in Pastor Fido that begins 'Care Selve beati.'"

It was at Cambridge, and at this period of Gray's life, that we find the beginning of that series of letters, extending through thirty-five years, which has been preserved and published. The earliest date is of a letter to his schoolmate West, May 8, 1736, and the last to a friend of later years, the Rev. Norton Nicholls, June 28, 1771, just a month before his death. The circle of Gray's correspondence was small: this was characteristic of the reserve with which he held intercourse with the world. His recluse habit of life and cautious companionship with his fellow-beings are apparent in the facts that he appears never to have corresponded with any woman other than a kinswoman,—and that his list of male correspondents, during thirty-five years, shows few other names than those of West, Horace Walpole, Wharton, Mason, Nicholls, and his young Swiss friend, Bonstetten. The rest of his letters, addressed to other persons, are in all not more than twenty. The collection of published letters has given Gray celebrity, along with

Swift, Chesterfield, Walpole, and Cowper, in English epistolary literature. Cowper's opinion was thus expressed: "I once thought Swift's letters the best that could be written, but I like Gray's better. His humour, or his wit, or whatever it is to be called, is never ill-natured or offensive, and yet, I think, equally poignant with the Dean's."

The character of Gray's college studies, so far as the course was at his command, cannot now be very precisely traced. There is reason to suppose that he withdrew as far as possible from the mathematical studies, for the cultivation of which the University of Cambridge has always been distinguished, and applied himself to classical literature, history, and the kindred subjects.

After a residence of about half a year in his father's house, Gray, at the request of his friend and schoolmate, Horace Walpole, accompanied him on a continental tour, which occupied more than two years, spent chiefly in Italy. This opened new and enlarged opportunities of cultivation, which, as his letters show, were sedulously improved, and which entered into the formation of his poetic character. He was a susceptible and studious observer

of nature and of art. The intelligent and critical interest which he took in architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, is recorded both in his correspondence and in his criticisms. Of these, there have been preserved his "Criticisms on Architecture and Painting, during a Tour in Italy" (published in his prose-works); a collection of music, chiefly of the old Italian masters, made at Florence, in six large volumes, with notices and remarks on their works; and an annotated collection of engravings.

However valuable Gray's Italian tour may have been in adding to his learning and accomplishments, and thus proving part of his imaginative culture, the direct poetic productions from it were limited to a few of his minor Latin poems. It was in the sympathy of his friendship for West, that he appears to have found encouragement for poetic composition; for it was to him that Gray addressed a stanza in a letter from Genoa in 1739; the Elegiac Verses occasioned by the sight of the Plains where the battle of Trebia was fought; the Alcaic Ode, composed immediately after his journey to Frascati and the cascades of Tivoli, and addressed

from Rome to the same friend, "Carmen ad C. Favonium Zephyrinum;" the Hexameters on Mount Gaurus, describing the sudden rising of Monte Nuovo near Puzzoli, and of the destruction which attended it in 1538, as described in Sandys's Travels; and the farewell lines to Florence, "Oh Fæsulæ amæna," which the late Sir Egerton Brydges cites as "that most exquisite Latin fragment, which so exactly describes the scenery on the banks of the Arno. This," he adds, "is the exact scenery from the public park or drive called the Cassini, on the banks of the Arno, above the city." (Recollections of Foreign Travels.) In the same letter Gray communicated his imitation of an Italian sonnet by Buondelmonte, and also the first fifty-three lines of a poem, in Latin hexameters, which he had begun at Florence in the winter of 1740,—the didactic poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi," which is the most considerable of his Latin compositions, and far the most elaborate of all his poems in the conception. It was meant to stand in much the same relation to Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding as Lucretius's poem, "De Natura Rerum," did to the system of Epicurus. The general design

of the poem was of four books: first, on the origin of our ideas; second, on the distribution of these ideas in the memory; third, on the provinces of reason and its gradual improvement; and, fourth, on the cause and effects of the passions. Of this plan, all that was accomplished was the fragment, in two hundred and seven lines, of the first book (with a statement of the "argument") and twenty-nine lines of the fourth book. That so little was in this achieved is perhaps less to be regretted, inasmuch as Gray's poetic career shows, that his genius, either for want of natural power or of due discipline, was not equal to elaborate and sustained productions; and, moreover, even if he had been able to break through the circumscription of so contracted a system of metaphysics as that of Locke's, he would hardly have brought to a high philosophic theme that union of wise and imaginative philosophy which was needed.

Much the greater part of Gray's foreign residence was at Florence; but the tour extended southward to Naples and its neighbourhood, where he and Walpole were among the first English travellers who visited the remains of Herculaneum. This

was in the summer of 1740, a little more than a year after the important excavations, which led to the discovery of the ancient city, were begun by order of the King of the Two Sicilies. Gray's good scholarship served in pointing out to his companion the reference to the hidden city in Statius's "Sylvæ;" and a letter to his mother describes the appearance it presented to his eyes.

At Reggio, in 1741, after two years of travelling companionship, Gray and Walpole parted, and in anger. The cause of the quarrel has never been precisely ascertained; but an adequate explanation may be found in the want of congeniality, put as it was to the test of travel and its daily association; the rupture was doubtless the delayed catastrophe of petty and repeated discords. The contrast of character and situation in life has been well stated by Sir Egerton Brydges in his "Imaginative Biography:" "Gray, partly from native turn of mind, and partly from the sufferings of childhood, was of a most grave and melancholy cast; timid, reserved, delicate, and fastidious; an exquisite classical scholar and skilled in all the arts. Walpole was the spoiled child of fortune; gay, volatile, ingenious, witty, ac-

complished, as fond of the arts as Gray, but less sure in his taste; vain, conceited, rich in anecdote, curious in history, researchful in little things rather than in great, delighted with gems and frivolities, and artificial in all he said, did, and liked." What a contrast between the homes which these two young men had come from!—the one, the humble and unhappy household of the morose and despotic London scrivener; the other, the city residence of the prime minister, or his country-lodge at Richmond, or the more magnificent mansion at Houghton, with all the luxuries and social voluptuousness in which Sir Robert Walpole delighted to find relief from the cares of state!

Not a great while after they had both returned to England, there was a restoration of intercourse, if not of friendship, the overtures of reconciliation having been offered by Walpole. Many years after the quarrel, when Mr. Nicholls endeavoured to ascertain from Gray an account of it, he said, "'Walpole was the son of the first minister, and you may easily conceive that on this account he might assume an air of superiority, or do or say something, which perhaps I did not bear as

well as I ought.' This was all I ever heard from him on the subject; but it is in stead of a volume to those who know the independent and lofty spirit of Gray." This is confirmed by Walpole's own unreserved admissions in a letter to Mason, about two years after the death of Gray: "I am conscious," he writes, "that in the beginning of the differences between Gray and me, the fault was mine. I was young, too fond of my own diversions; nay, I do not doubt, too much intoxicated by indulgence, vanity, and the insolence of my situation, as a prime minister's son, not to have been inattentive to the feelings of one, I blush to say it, that I knew was obliged to me,—of one whom presumption and folly made me deem not very superior in parts, though I have since felt my infinite inferiority to him. I treated him insolently. He loved me, and I did not think he did. I reproached him with the difference between us, when he acted from the conviction of knowing that he was my superior. I often disregarded his wish of seeing places, which I would not quit my own amusements to visit, though I offered to send him thither without me. Forgive me, if I say

that his temper was not conciliating, at the same time that I confess to you that he acted a more friendly part, had I had the sense to take advantage of it. He freely told me my faults. I declared I did not desire to hear them, nor would correct them. You will not wonder that, with the dignity of his spirit, and the obstinate carelessness of mine, the breach must have widened till we became incompatible."

The rupture between Gray and Walpole appears to have an almost exaggerated importance in the poet's biography; and one is half tempted to believe that it is for lack of materials in a life so uneventful that it occupies a rather inordinate space. Indeed, with most men, such an occurrence would have passed away as one of the casual and most common disappointments of life,—the natural result of circumstances bringing into too close connection two uncongenial tempers. Yet, upon a spirit so delicately sensitive as Gray's, the effect was no doubt a deep and abiding one; it probably compelled a more recluse reserve and a more self-consuming silence, and thus aggravated the morbid tendencies of his nature. When the

friends "stood aloof" (to borrow the language of Coleridge's sublime image of a broken friendship), there were "scars remaining" on the heart of Gray which the after-years did not wear away.

Having parted from Walpole, Gray went to Venice, thence to Padua, Verona, Milan, and Turin; crossed the Alps, and then homewards through France. His published correspondence gives no letters during this period of his absence; perhaps he was not in heart to write. His tour homewards is associated with his most famous Latin poem, the Alcaic Ode, written in the Album of the Grande Chartreuse in Dauphiny, August, 1741. He had visited the place on his way to Italy,—with what deep emotion, appears from his letters to his mother and to West. To the former, in describing the spot, he speaks of it as "one of the most solemn, the most romantic, and the most astonishing scenes I ever beheld." To the latter he writes, "In our little journey up to the Grande Chartreuse, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation that there was no restraining; not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes

that would awe an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noonday; you have Death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed as to compose the mind without frighting it. I am well persuaded St. Bruno was a man of no common genius, to choose such a situation for his retirement; and perhaps should have been a disciple of his, had I been born in his time."

On his homeward way, Gray stepped aside to renew the solemn impressions of the place, deepened now with the pensiveness arising from the melancholy sentiments of a broken friendship. His feelings found utterance in the admirable Ode written in the Album of the Monastery. It is proper to add the remark here, that while this brief composition has been admired as a genuine burst of poetry, it has not stood the strict scrutiny of scholars with regard to the laws of Latin metre. It has been observed that Gray, though exquisite in the observance of the nicest beauty in the hexameters of Virgil, showed himself strangely unacquainted with the rules of Horace's lyric verse.

Travellers have sought at the Grande Chartreuse for the original copy of the Ode in Gray's delicate handwriting, but in vain. It is only recently that the loss of it has been satisfactorily explained, by the statement of the fact, that during the French Revolution, a rabble from Grenoble and other places attacked the monastery, burnt, plundered, or destroyed books, papers, and property, and dispersed the inmates.

Gray returned to London in September, 1741; and in the following November his father died, leaving a broken estate and a dark domestic memory. His mother, with such of her property as she had been able to save from her husband's imprudence and violence, retired with her sister to reside at Stoke, near Windsor. The room occupied by the son is still preserved and called "Gray's;" and his favourite walks are remembered.

It was the desire of Gray's family that he should apply himself to the study of the law, with a view to professional life; but as his means were inadequate to the expenses of a residence in the Inns of Court, he determined to return to Cambridge, to take his bachelor's degree in Civil Law. There

is nothing in Gray's correspondence, and little in his character, to show that he ever nerved his mind to the preparatory toil of professional pursuits, or that he was equal to that stern and self-denying abstinence with which a Mansfield or a Blackstone bade farewell to the Muses; and still less was he equal to that combination of effort which, in our own day, has given to Talfourd distinction both as a lawyer and a poet. And, on the other hand, Gray did not turn away from the profession of the law, as Southey did, because of the consciousness of powers to be wisely and worthily employed in literature. When he shrunk from his profession, it was perhaps more in the spirit of literary self-indulgence than in any faith in poetic impulses, such as has given to great poets moral authority to make the attainment of excellence in the poetic art the principal object of intellectual pursuit. That Gray would have been a far happier man, if his life had been actuated by stronger necessities, and the aims of it better defined, cannot be doubted. It is at the age of twenty-six that, writing to West, he exclaims, in allusion to himself: "Alas! for one who has nothing to do but amuse himself."

This period of Gray's life also shows that uncertainty of purpose which arises from inability to measure, with any approach to accuracy, powers, present or prospective, and thus to guide efforts wisely, according to ability already acquired or to be gained by future discipline. It was in 1742 that he was occupied with the plan of his tragedy of "Agrippina,"—an effort prompted probably by witnessing in Paris the representation of Racine's "Britannicus," but checked by a little adverse though friendly criticism, and abandoned in diffidence of his powers as a dramatic poet. One complete scene,—the opening one,—and a few lines of a second serve but to increase the list of his unaccomplished projects and poetic fragments. The first scene has never been printed exactly as it came from the poet's own hand, but as it appeared originally, with some alterations by Mason.

As reading was always to him a more luxurious labour than composition, Gray applied himself to ancient literature and to Italian poetry, and found amusement in Joseph Andrews (in which his good sense saw more of practical philosophy than in the

metaphysics of the Shaftesbury school,) and in the romances of Crebillon and Marivaux. When he wrote poetry, it appears to have been with a lingering uncertainty whether English or Latin verse was the more genial effort; for, while he made a translation from Propertius, he also composed, in Latin, the unfinished "Heroic Epistle from Sophonisba to Masinissa," which Mason published on account of the natural sentiment and poetic description in the passage on the triumphal entry of the young Masinissa, and because it was the only original specimen of Gray's Ovidian verse. A Greek epigram was at the same time communicated to West, to whom he said, "I send you an inscription for a wood adjoining to a park of mine (it is on the confines of Mount Cithæron, on the left hand as you go to Thebes); you know I am no friend to hunters, and hate to be disturbed by their noise."

In June of 1742, while spending some time with his mother at Stoke, Gray composed his "Ode to Spring," entitled in the original manuscript "Noontide," and sent it to West. The letter was returned unopened, with the intelligence of the death of his young friend, whose declining health had been

for some time watched with solicitude. It will have been observed, that this friend's affectionate hand had been the chosen receptacle of Gray's poetical effusions, as he from time to time was in the mood of composition; and not improbably, for one whose nature was so delicately strung, there was need of the assurance of such congenial welcome for what he would reluctantly have exposed to the world.

Affectionate sorrow for his friend's death was not without its poetic promptings. His sense of bereavement had direct expression in the "Sonnet on the Death of Mr. Richard West,"—an expression, undoubtedly, of true emotion, but rendered frigid by the fashion of it in the ill-judged introduction of mythological figure. It is, it may be added, the only attempt by Gray at that form of metrical composition, the power and beauty of which have been proved pre-eminently by Milton and by Wordsworth. The pensive influences of grief may be traced, less directly but with more excellent effects, in Gray's other productions in the summer of 1742. In August of that year, the "Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College,"

and the "Hymn to Adversity," were written; and about that time, the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" was begun. To this period, also, belongs the fragment of the fourth book of the Latin poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi," which he had begun at Florence; this fragment of twenty-nine lines was devoted wholly to an apostrophe to his dead friend; and such was Gray's fine facility in Latin verse, that in this form he has given the most natural and feeling expression of his sorrow, and of the beauty and purity of character which endeared the memory of West.

This fragment of Latin poetry—complete in itself as an elegy—is supposed to have been Gray's last composition in that language, although it has not been ascertained when he continued the passage sent from Italy. It was until he was twenty-six years old that Gray's poetical aspirations appear to have been uncertain in their direction, whether to Latin or English verse. Mason states that at the time when their acquaintance began, which was in 1744, Gray set greater value on his Latin poetry than on what he had composed in his native tongue. Several causes may have concurred to produce such a

preference,—his Eton education, his thorough scholarship, and the pleasurable facility it gave in the command of an ancient language, and, not least, the reserve which entered so largely into his character, and which, in the expression of his feelings, sought rather the shelter of a dead language than the exposure of a living one. The year 1742 was probably decisive of the poet's career in this respect; and the compositions of that year awakened in him a more just and inspiriting sense of his own powers in English verse. If Gray's ambition and taste had continued exclusively or chiefly directed to the composition of Latin poetry, it is apparent from what he has done, that he might have attained that high but limited reputation which success in such a department gives,—a reputation like that of Buchanan in an earlier century, or of Gray's contemporary (Cowper's favourite), Vincent Bourne. It has been reserved for a living and now aged author, Walter Savage Landor, to acquire distinction by the exquisite beauty and classical purity of his Latin poetry, by his English poems, and still more by his admirable English prose. Gray's compositions in that year had also

another influence, in that they indicated to the poet himself the path of poetic composition which was the genial one for him, and in which he was to gain his fame. The "Ode to Spring," the Eton College Ode, and the "Hymn to Adversity," following in quick succession, revealed the possession of genuine lyrical powers, and must have given to the poet the happy consciousness of ability to achieve, in the various forms of that species of poetry, what he was unequal to in the larger and more elaborate forms of dramatic or philosophical poetry.

In 1742 Gray took his degree of bachelor of Civil Law. "I am got," he writes, "half-way to the top of jurisprudence." This did not, however, induce him to remove from Cambridge, where his continued residence and pursuits are thus described by his biographer and editor, the Rev. Mr. Mitford:—

"Gray's residence at Cambridge was now continued, not from any partiality to the place, but partly from the scantiness of his income, which prevented his living in London; and partly, no doubt, for the convenience which its libraries af-

forded. Original composition he almost entirely neglected; but he was diligently employed in a regular and very constant perusal of the Greek and Latin authors; so that in six years he had read all the writers of eminence in these languages, digesting and examining their contents, marking their peculiarities, and noting their corrupt and difficult passages. Many of these learned and critical commonplace books exist in the library of Pembroke College; many others I have seen, all showing very curious and accurate scholarship, particularly those on the Greek historians and orators; and all written with a delicacy and accuracy of penmanship, scarcely inferior to the productions of the press. He formed, for his own instruction, a collection of Greek chronology, which extended from the 30th to the 110th Olympiad, a period of three hundred and thirty-two years, and which is chiefly designed to compare the time of all great men, their writings and transactions. 'I have read,' he writes, 'Pausanias and Athenæus all through, and Æschylus again. I am now in Pindar and Lysias; for I take verse and prose together, like bread and cheese.' In the margin, also, of his

classical books, various critical notices are inserted; and I remember many conjectural emendations in his copy of Barnes's Euripides; although critical emendation of the text of the ancient authors was not that branch of scholarship in which he much indulged. To the works of Plato he paid great attention, as may be seen in the extracts from the Pembroke MSS. printed by Mr. Matthias; and Mr. Cary, in his translation of the 'Birds' of Aristophanes,' has done justice to Gray's accurate erudition, displayed in his notes on that author."

In the estimation of the late Dr. Parr, Gray stood second among those whom he considered best acquainted with the philosophy of Plato.* That eminent Greek scholar remarked, "When I read the poet Gray's observations on Plato, published by Mr. Matthias, my first impulse was to exclaim,

* Floyd Sydenham, the translator of Plato, was the one whom he ranked first among the Platonic scholars. This explanation may be necessary, when the story is remembered of Parr's answer to the question: "Whom he reckoned the best Greek scholars in England?"—"Porson is the first, Wakefield is the third; it does not become me to say who is the second."

'Why did not I write this?' Gray alone possesses the merit of avoiding the errors into which other commentators have fallen; there are no fine-spun observations,—no metaphysical absurdities in Gray." Field's Life of Parr, vol. ii. p. 358.

Among Gray's papers, after his death, was found the short fragment beginning with "Hail, Horrors, hail," which was evidently written about the time of his return to Cambridge, and has obtained a title merely by Mason's remark: "It seems to have been intended as a hymn or address to Ignorance." The system of education at Cambridge was undoubtedly in many respects uncongenial to Gray, whose zeal was directed to classical literature, and not to the exact sciences. The contradiction of his tastes prompted occasionally a querulous or sarcastic passage in his letters, and suggested probably the more elaborate querulousness of this fragment, to which undue importance has been given as a satire on the University. Dr. Parr thought it worth while to devote considerable space, in one of the long notes of his Spital Sermon, to a zealous defence of the University against what was considered Gray's injurious habit of speaking. That the poet's

expressions, whether in prose or verse, were ebullitions of some morbid and splenetic mood, rather than the utterance of deliberate judgment, is perhaps sufficiently shown by the simple fact that for twenty years the University of Cambridge was his chosen home. It was there, and in the year 1744, that his acquaintance began with William Mason, then a scholar of St. John's College. It was an acquaintance which, by sympathy of feeling and congeniality of taste, ripened into a friendship which lasted for life, and to which the survivor rendered the tribute of biography, which has for ever coupled the names of these two poets together, almost as closely as, by another kind of community, the names of some of the early English dramatists, especially Beaumont and Fletcher, are inseparably associated.

In 1747, the Ode to Eton College was published by Dodsley, being the first separate publication of any of Gray's productions. Walpole endeavoured to persuade him to publish his poems along with those of his dead friend West; but Gray's modesty and good sense both led him to look upon what he had done as materials too scanty for such a publication. He gratified Walpole, however, by the

humorous "Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat."

In the summer of the following year, Gray wrote from Stoke to his friend Dr. Wharton, the first fifty-seven lines of an ethical poem, which he thus speaks of: "I fill my paper with the beginning of an essay; what name to give it I know not; but the subject is the Alliance of Education and Government: I mean to show that they must both concur to produce great and useful men." He afterwards proceeded with the composition of the poem as far as the 107th line; and there stopping, left it to be added to the catalogue of his "Fragments,"—another and the last of his large poetical enterprises unaccomplished. The "Commentary" which he prepared went beyond the text, and from it and some detached maxims, found among his papers, we can gather some further notion of the poet's conception. Gibbon, in a note in his History, has said: "Instead of compiling tables of chronology and natural history, why did not Mr. Gray apply the powers of his genius to finish the philosophic poem of which he has left such an exquisite specimen?" It was a fitting question for one who, like the his-

torian, united gigantic powers of conception and of execution. Mason suggests that Gray was discouraged from further progress with the poem, by finding some of his reflections had been anticipated by Montesquieu in the "Esprit des Loix," which appeared at that time; and that afterwards, when he had thoughts of resuming his plan, and dedicating it with an introductory ode to the French philosopher, the death of Montesquieu in 1755 caused him to give the plan up for ever. It was in the same amiable spirit of apology that his biographer explained the abandonment of the Latin philosophical poem, by the discouragement from the cold reception of Cardinal de Polignac's "Anti-Lucretius,"—a long-expected modern Latin poem. For Gray's failure in his large literary enterprises there was a better reason than such as these which his biographer assigned; and Gray himself probably understood it, as appears from his conversation with another one of his friends. "I asked him," said Mr. Nicholls, in his "Reminiscences of Gray," "why he had not continued that beautiful fragment beginning

'As sickly plants betray a niggard earth,'

he said, *because he could not.* When I expressed surprise at this, he explained himself as follows,—that he had been used to write only lyric poetry, in which, the poems being short, he had accustomed himself and was able to polish every part; that, this having become his habit, he could not do otherwise; that the labour of this method in a long poem would be intolerable; besides which, the poem would lose its effect for want of chiaro-oscuro; for that, to produce effect, it was absolutely necessary to have weak parts."

In 1749, one of the very few near family ties which were left for Gray, was broken by the death of his aunt, Mary Antrobus, his mother's sister and affectionate companion in the industry and the cares of her life. This bereavement, closing as it did on earth all the beautiful domestic affections that cluster round a maiden-aunt, was a serious loss to one whose love of kindred was confined to narrow limits. "I have lost," wrote Gray to his mother, "a person I loved very much, and have been used to from my infancy." It is supposed to have given another of those pensive poetic influences to him, such as at the time of the death

of his friend West: "The Elegy in the Country Churchyard," which had been begun some seven years before, was now resumed, and in 1750 communicated to Walpole, to whom, in the summer of that year, he wrote: "I have been here at Stoke a few days (where I shall continue good part of the summer), and having put an end to a thing whose beginning you have seen long ago, I immediately send it you. You will, I hope, look upon it in the light of a thing with an end to it: a merit that most of my writings have wanted, and are like to want."

"The Elegy" was much handed about in manuscript, and, like Coleridge's "Christabel," in that condition gained considerable celebrity. In 1751, Gray, having received a forewarning that it was about to be printed without his consent, desired Walpole to place his copy in Dodsley's hands, to be printed and published, with this simple direction: "Print it without any interval between the stanzas, because the sense is in some places continued beyond them; and the title must be 'Elegy written in a Country Churchyard.' If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by

accident, I should like it better." Such was Gray's characteristic shrinking from publicity!

It is not known precisely how long Gray was employed in the composition of "The Elegy;" although there is evidence of that frequent and studious revision, which was his habit of poetical composition. In the early editions it was printed not in separated but continuous stanzas. In his acknowledgments to Walpole for his care of the publication, there is visible a sentiment of gratification in the expression of some lingering reluctance at getting into print: "You have," he writes, "indeed, conducted with great decency my little *misfortune*. Nurse Dodsley has given it a pinch or two in the cradle, that (I doubt) it will bear the marks of as long as it lives." The locality of the "Elegy" is somewhat undetermined; but happily the interest of the poem is not at all dependent on such a question. The natural curiosity on this point finds some gratification in the tradition that it was composed within the precincts of the Church of Granchester, about two miles from Cambridge; and the curfew is supposed to have been the great bell of St. Mary's.

"The Elegy" promptly and permanently took its place in English poetry, and gave to its author that wide-spread and excellent popularity which has been spoken of at the beginning of this memoir, and which no verbal stricture or ingenuity of adverse criticism has diminished. Gray himself witnessed the sudden popularity of the poem with surprise, and is said to have attributed it to the subject, which might, he thought, have been as well received if written in prose as in verse. If such an opinion has been rightly reported, it shows an imperfect sense of that power over the imagination and the affections which is peculiar to poetry. Southey, with a deeper and wiser insight into poetic art, has spoken of this opinion of Gray's: "There is a charm in metre, as there is in music; it is of the same kind, though the relation may be remote; and it differs less in degree, perhaps, than one who has not an ear for poetry can believe. * * * Gray's Elegy owes much of its popularity to its strain of verse; the strain of thought alone, natural and touching as it is, would never have impressed it upon the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands, unless the diction and metre

in which it was embodied had been perfectly in unison with it. Beattie ascribed its general reception to both causes; 'It is a poem,' he says, 'which is universally understood and admired; not only for its poetical beauties, but also, and perhaps chiefly, for its expressing sentiments in which every man thinks himself interested, and which, at certain times, are familiar to all men.' Neither cause would have sufficed for producing so general and extensive and permanent an effect, unless the poem had been, in the full import of the word, harmonious." (Southey's Life of Cowper, vol. ii. p. 173.) Such is a poet's genial criticism on a fellow-poet's work. If it be not an ungracious effort to analyze the fame of "The Elegy," it may be traced first to the universal and unfailing interest of its theme and the pensive beauty that envelops it; then to the manifold workings of a pure and cultivated imagination upon it; and, further, to an exquisite diction and the charm of the music of appropriate metre. "I know not," said Sir Egerton Brydges, "what there is of spell in the following simple line:

'The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep;'

but no frequency of repetition can exhaust its touching charm." (Imaginative Biography, vol. i. p. 111.)

A manuscript copy of "The Elegy," in the poet's own handwriting, preserved at Cambridge among the Pembroke College collection of Gray's papers, and given in fac-simile in Matthias's edition of his works, shows the interest with which he watched the steady popularity of the poem. In the margin of the manuscript, in Gray's own delicate writing, is the following note, the entries apparently made at different times, as the successive editions appeared: "Published in Feb^{ry} 1751, by Dodsley, and went thro' four editions in two months; and afterwards a fifth, 6th, 7th and 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th, printed also in 1753 with Mr. Bentley's Designs, of wh^{ch} there is a 2d edition, and again by Dodsley in his Miscellany, vol. 4th, and in a Scotch collection call'd *the Union.* translated into Latin by Ch^{r} Anstey Esq. and the Rev. Mr. Roberts, and publish'd in 1762; and again in the same year by Rob: Lloyd M: A:"

One peculiar and remarkable tribute to the merit of "The Elegy," is to be noticed in the great number

of translations which have been made of it into various languages, both of ancient and modern Europe. It is the same kind of tribute which has been rendered to "Robinson Crusoe" and to "The Pilgrim's Progress," and is proof of the same universality of interest, transcending the limits of language and of race. To no poem in the English language has the same kind of homage been paid so abundantly. Of what other poem is there a polyglott edition? Italy and England have competed with their polyglott editions of "The Elegy;" Torri's, bearing the title, "Elegia di Tomasso Gray sopra un Cimitero di Campagna, tradotta dell' Inglese in più lingue. Verona, 1817.—Livorno, 1843:" and Van Voorst's London edition.

The following list of the translations will perhaps best illustrate this unwonted tribute to a poet's genius:

Hebrew, by G. Venturi, an eminent Italian Oriental scholar, who in his version limited himself to the use of words and, as far as possible, phrases found in the Old Testament.

Greek, by Professor Cooke, Cambridge, 1775; Dr. Norbury, Eton, 1793; Bishop Sparke, London,

1794; Dr. Coote, London, 1794; Stephen Weston, London, 1794; Edward Tew, London, 1795; and the "Epitaph" alone, by J. Plumtree, 1795; and the Elegy by Cyprianio.

Latin, by Robert Lloyd, 1762; W. H. Roberts, Cambridge, 1762, and London, 1778; Signor Gio. Costa, Padua, 1772; Gilbert Wakefield, Cambridge, 1776; Christopher Anstey, London, 1778; anonymous, Cambridge; S. N. E., London, 1824; W. Hilyard; J. H. Macauley, in the "Arundines Cami;" G. F. Barbieri; Ben del Bene; G. Venturi.

Italian, by M. Cesarotti, Padua, 1772; G. Gennari, Padua, 1772; Dr. Giannini, London, 1782; G. Torelli, Verona, 1776; D. Trant, (prose); M. Lastri; A. Buttura; P. Baraldi; M. Castellazi; Elisabetta Sesler Bonò (prose); M. Leoni; L. Mancini; Cavazzoca. D. Gregori, Rome, 1821.

Portuguese, by Boulard.

French, by de Berchere, Hookham, 1778; L. D., Chatham, 1806; Anonymous (prose), Paris "an vi."; Le Tourneur, Dubois, Cabanis, Chénier, Fayolle, Kérivalant, Grénus, Charrin, Le Mièrre, Villeneuve, Fontanes, Chateaubriand.

German, by Gotter, Gotha, 1788; Seume, Riga, 1801; Kosegarten, 1798; Mason; Müller; Rupprecht.*

One of the incidents of the popularity of "The Elegy" was Gray's acquaintance with his neighbours, Lady Cobham and Miss Speed, which prompted his attempt at humorous poetry, "A Long Story," opening with the clever description of the Elizabethan architecture of Stoke-Pogis House, then in possession of the Viscountess Cobham,—a mansion memorable in earlier times, both as a residence of the celebrated Sir Edward Coke, who married a widow of the heir of Chancellor Hatton, and as one of the places of confinement of Charles I., when in the power of the Parliament: it has since

* This list is compiled from several authorities, but chiefly from an article selected from a German miscellany for "The Literary World," New York, Oct. 1849; and from several communications to that novel and useful periodical, "Notes and Queries," London, 1850.

Another instance may be mentioned of the unabated interest attaching to the memory of Gray: At a sale in London, in 1845, of books and manuscripts which had belonged to him, two small half sheets of paper, in a torn condition, were sold for one hundred pounds sterling. It was a manuscript of "The Elegy" in the poet's own handwriting.

Gray's time been the seat of the Penn family, and is now the property of the Right Hon. Mr. Labouchere. In one of his letters (Dec. 1751) to Wharton, he says of this effusion: "The verses you so kindly try to keep in countenance were wrote to divert that particular family, and succeeded accordingly; but being showed about in town, are not liked there at all."

Gray's next poetical composition was the "Stanzas to Mr. Bentley," in acknowledgment of the designs prepared by that gentleman, in 1753, for a new edition of the poems. There appears to be no reason to entitle these stanzas, as Mason has done, a fragment. A corner of the only manuscript that was preserved was torn off, and hence the last stanza stands incomplete in two of the lines. Mason and others have suggested several readings to supply the defect, but have not succeeded in giving any assurance of apt restoration. In this edition, it is thought better to print the stanza in its mutilated condition.

In 1753, at Stoke, the mother of Gray died,—a mother, memorable for the sorrows of her married life, for her devotion to her son, and by his

filial piety. Over the vault in the churchyard at Stoke-Pogis, in Buckinghamshire, where, seventeen years afterwards, he ordered his own body to be laid, he placed the latter part of this inscription, —touching in its simplicity:

IN THE VAULT BENEATH ARE DEPOSITED
IN HOPE OF A JOYFUL RESURRECTION
THE REMAINS OF
MARY ANTROBUS.
SHE DIED, UNMARRIED, NOV. V. MDCCXLIX.
AGED LXVI.

IN THE SAME PIOUS CONFIDENCE,
BESIDE HER FRIEND AND SISTER
HERE SLEEP THE REMAINS OF
DOROTHY GRAY,
WIDOW, THE CAREFUL TENDER MOTHER
OF MANY CHILDREN, ONE OF WHOM ALONE
HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SURVIVE HER
SHE DIED MARCH XI. MDCCLIII.
AGED LXVII.

When Gray in after life, in a letter to a friend, referred to his mother's death, he said: "It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday; and every day I live, it sinks deeper into my heart."

In 1754, Gray wrote the fragment to which has been given the title of "Ode to Vicissitude;" and in the following year, the "Ode on the Progress of Poetry" was finished, and "The Bard" begun. It was at this period that Walpole said that Gray was "*in flower.*" The first of these poems was shadowed forth in the poet's mind in the following sketch of his design, in a memorandum-book of 1754: "Contrast between the winter past and coming spring.—Joy, owing to that vicissitude.—Many who now feel that delight.—Sloth.—Envy.—Ambition. How much happier the rustic who feels it; though he knows not how." It stands the most beautiful of Gray's fragments, and while one cannot but regret its incompleteness, it is more deplorable to look at it pieced, as it usually is printed, with Mason's tawdry additions. In this edition it is given as the hand of Gray left it. Sir Egerton Brydges, through whose multifarious works there is scattered much fine appreciation of both the strength and the weakness of Gray's character, has spoken of this poem as the "sublime lyrical fragment on 'Vicissitude,'" "in which" (he adds) "I do not hesitate to pronounce the following stanza

among the most perfect specimens which the poetry of any country can produce:

'Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;
Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by:
Their raptures now, that wildly flow,
No yesterday nor morrow know;
'Tis man alone, that joy descries
With forward and reverted eyes.'"

Gray's commonplace book contained the following entry, which is believed to have been the conception of another Ode:

"All that men of power can do for men of genius is to leave them at their liberty, compared to birds that, when confined to a cage, do but regret the loss of their freedom in melancholy strains, and lose the luscious wildness and happy luxuriance of their notes, which used to make the woods resound." It is not known that a single poetical line of this conception was composed; but the poet's biographers have pleased themselves with suggesting that the "Ode" might have been entitled "The Liberty of Genius," or "The Connection between Genius and Grandeur."

In the summer of 1755, Gray's letters show that he was beginning to suffer from the approaches of his hereditary malady, the gout, with which the remainder of his life was troubled. In his pocket-journal, besides a diary of the weather and a calendar of observations on natural history, he kept that kind of record which is not a wise remembrancer for one of nervous temperament and valetudinarian propensities, a regular account of the state of his health. The following entry has been given as a specimen of many others: "Insomnia crebra, atque expergiscenti surdus quidam doloris sensus; frequens etiam in regione sterni oppressio, et cardialgia gravis, fere sempiterna."

In 1756 he removed from Peter-house, after a residence there of more than twenty years, to Pembroke-hall, where his most intimate friends resided. This removal (as he speaks of it, "a sort of æra in a life so barren of events") was caused by the vexation and even alarm he suffered from the rudeness and boisterous practical jokes of some riotous young men in the same college-building. His sensitiveness may possibly have been aggravated by the change in his health; but so serious were his

apprehensions that, as appears from one of his letters, he desired a friend to procure him a rope-ladder with iron hooks, to be used in case of fire at night; and two iron-bars are still shown on the window of the chamber occupied by Gray, and which, it is said, he caused to be placed there. His tone of complaint in the letters is, however, quite amiable; and it is pleasing to find him writing from his new academic home (a recollection of his travels coming back to him): "I am as quiet as in the Grande Chartreuse; and everybody as civil as they could be to Mary of Valens" (the foundress of the College) "in person."

In 1757 Gray went up to London, taking with him for publication his two new poems,—the ode on "The Progress of Poesy," and "The Bard." The latter ode, which had been laid aside unfinished for about two years, was resumed in consequence of a happy lyrical impulse caught directly from the tones of a harp, which the poet heard performed on with admirable effect by Parry, a blind Welch harper. In London he met Walpole, who thus mentions what passed: "I found Gray in town last week. He brought his two odes to be printed.

I snatched them out of Dodsley's hands, and they are to be the first-fruits of my press." A thousand copies were accordingly printed at Strawberry-Hill. This edition is in quarto, with a view of Strawberry-Hill on the title.

The reception of these two "Pindaric Odes" (as they were styled) bore a strong contrast to the prompt popularity that welcomed "The Elegy." The difference is to be accounted for both by the difference in the poems, and by the prevailing taste in poetry,—the power of the poet, and the weakness of the generation to which he sang. The odes were in a higher strain than Gray had theretofore ventured on, and demanded a more strenuous effort of imagination in the reader than most men are willing to give to poetry, especially when, as during so much of the eighteenth century, the tone of poetry had been in harmony with habits of mental indolence. A generation accustomed to much that was no better than apathy or artificial sentiment needed time and discipline to teach them to know and to feel the truth and beauty of any poetic utterance that was more earnest and enthusiastic, and to win them to loftier moods of poetry. Ob-

security was the burden of complaint,—characteristic of an age which about ten years before had turned away with worse neglect from the odes of Collins, whose life at this very time was drawing on darkly to its close.

The popular prejudice against these poems of Gray's manifested itself in the parodies which followed them about three years after their publication, —the odes "To Obscurity" and "To Oblivion," the joint compositions of George Colman, the elder, and Robert Lloyd,—the first aimed at Gray, and the second at Mason. These satires, which, like the "Rejected Addresses" of a later day, had the usual success of clever parodies, had their origin probably in that small association, so busy with banter and burlesque, the "Nonsense Club," of which Cowper also was a member; they were published in a quarto pamphlet, with a vignette in the title-page of an ancient poet safely seated and playing on his harp; and at the end a tail-piece representing a modern poet in huge boots flung from a mountain by his Pegasus into the sea, and losing his tie-wig in the fall. Southey, in his Life of Cowper (chap. iii.), has well remarked: "Little did the two wits think

how small, in comparison with Gray, they would appear in the eyes of posterity; and that 'The Bard,' which was then neglected by the public, would, in the course of the next generation, become the most popular ode in the English language. * * * It was easy for Gray, in the consciousness of his own superiority, to smile at the cleverness with which his manner had been imitated in a mock-lyric strain; no disparagement is implied in such burlesque; and one of his temper could more easily forgive the personal ridicule, as unjust as it was unbecoming, than the authors would forgive themselves for it, when they came to years of discretion. * * * What was personal and injurious in these mock-lyrics is now so harmless, and what was always unexceptionable in them is so good (for they are among the very best of their kind), that whenever the works of Gray and Mason are, as they ought to be, conjointly published, it is to be hoped these pieces will find a place in the appendix, as a trophy to their fame." When Colman, in 1787, near thirty years afterwards, published a collection of his own writings containing the parodies, he thus refers to them

in the preface: "These odes were, indeed, a piece of boy's play with my schoolmate Lloyd, with whom they were written in concert, in those days when we had so little grace as to ridicule our poetic-masters, joking perhaps too licentiously with the prettinesses of one poet, and the obscurities of another. We were not, however, insensible to their real merits and excellencies, nor desirous to depreciate them."

This subject ought not to be dismissed without an allusion to what is honourably illustrative both of Gray's personal and poetic character,—the manner in which he was affected by the want of success of these poems, and by the satirical parodies of them. The motto for the odes, selected from Pindar, showed that the poet did not hope for a ready reception by the multitude; writing to one of his friends, he quietly remarks: "The Συνετοὶ appear to be still fewer than even I expected." "Mr. Fox" (the first Lord Holland) "thinks, if the Bard sung his song but once over, King Edward could not possibly understand him. Indeed, I am of his opinion, and am certain, if he had sung it fifty times, it was impossible the king should know a jot the more about Edward the III. and Queen

Elizabeth, and Spenser and Milton, &c., but that was no reason why Mr. Fox should not." Writing to Mr. Hurd (afterwards Bishop of Litchfield), he says: "Even my friends tell me they" (the Odes) "do not *succeed*, and write me moving topics of consolation on that head. In short, I have heard of nobody but an actor" (Garrick) "and a doctor of divinity" (Warburton) "that profess their esteem for them. Oh yes, a lady of quality (a friend of Mason's), who is a great reader. She knew there was a compliment to Dryden, but never suspected there was any thing said about Shakspeare or Milton, till it was explained to her, and wishes that there had been titles prefixed to tell what they were about." In all that he wrote or said, as far as it has been preserved, there appears a tranquil and unaffected humour indicating that placid self-possession which is an attribute and a glory of genius in its period of popular neglect.

With the same playful composure he regarded the parodies. He wrote to Mason, "I have sent you a bloody satire written against no less persons than *you and I* by name." * * "Mr. Colman * * makes very tolerable fun with me, where I under-

stand him (which is not everywhere); but seems more angry with you. Lest people should not understand the humour of the thing (which, indeed, to do they must have our lyricisms at their finger ends), letters come out in Lloyd's Evening Post to tell them who and what it was that he meant, and says it is like to produce a great combustion in the literary world. So if you have any mind to *combustle* about it, well and good; for me, I am neither so literary nor so combustible." To Dr. Wharton, he writes: "* * there was a satire printed against me and Mason jointly; it is called *Two Odes:* the one is inscribed to Obscurity (that is me), the other to Oblivion. * * The writer is a Mr. Colman, who published the *Connoisseur*, nephew to the late Lady Bath, and a friend of Garrick's. I believe his odes sell no more than mine did, for I saw a heap of them lie in a bookseller's window, who recommended them to me as a very pretty thing." When the "Pindaric Odes" were again printed in an edition of his poems, about eleven years afterwards, Gray added some notes, "partly," he remarks, in one of his letters, "from justice (to acknowledge the debt where I had borrowed any

thing), partly from ill-temper, just to tell the gentle reader that Edward I. was not Oliver Cromwell, nor Queen Elizabeth the Witch of Endor;" and again he says, "As to the notes, I do it out of spite, because the public did not understand the two odes (which I have called Pindaric), though the first was not very dark, and the second alluded to a few common facts, to be found in any six-penny history of England, by way of question and answer, for the use of children."

While Gray did not suffer the cold reception of these odes seriously to affect his happiness, or his own fair estimate of them, it did probably discourage further poetical effort; for certainly thirteen years followed without the production of any poem worthy of his better fame. In 1760 his attention was attracted to the Erse fragments and fabrications, published by Macpherson, as the poems of Ossian, and also to some ancient Welsh poetry translated into Latin. Although perplexed with the question of the authenticity of these poems, Gray was strongly affected by them, and, it is somewhat surprising to say, was anxious to give his faith to them. His admiration so far revived his

enthusiasm as to cause him to resume poetical composition in the two translations or paraphrases from the Norse tongue, "The Fatal Sisters" and "Vegtam's Kivitha, or the Descent of Odin;" and in the poems from the Welsh, "The Triumphs of Owen" and "The Death of Hoel." Gray himself was but indifferently satisfied with these attempts, which he published for the special purpose of supplying a space made vacant in the edition of his poems published in 1769. He gives this account of the matter to Beattie: "When I was in London last spring, Dodsley, the bookseller, asked my leave to reprint, in a smaller form, all I ever published; to which I consented; and added, that I would send him a few explanatory notes; and if he would omit entirely the *Long Story* (which was never meant for the public, and only suffered to appear in that pompous edition because of Mr. Bentley's designs, which were not intelligible without it), I promised to send him something else to print instead of it, lest the bulk of so small a volume should be reduced to nothing at all. * * The additions * * are imitations of two pieces of old Norwegian poetry, in which there was a wild

spirit that struck me; but for my paraphrases I cannot say much." To Walpole he gives an equally characteristic and more familiar account: "Dodsley told me in the spring that the plates from Mr. Bentley's designs were worn out, and he wanted to have them copied and reduced to a smaller scale for a new edition. I dissuaded him from so silly an expense, and desired he would put in no ornaments at all. The *Long Story* was to be totally omitted, as its only use (that of explaining the prints) was gone; but to supply the place of it in bulk, lest *my works* should be mistaken for the works of a flea or a pismire, I promised to send him an equal weight of poetry or prose; so since my return hither" (Cambridge) "I have put up about two ounces of stuff, viz., the Fatal Sisters, the Descent of Odin (of both which you had copies), a bit of something from the Welsh, and certain little notes. * * * This is literally all; and with all this I shall be but a shrimp of an author." Walpole's admiration faltered at these poems; writing to Mr. Montagu, he said: "Gray has added to his poems three ancient odes from Norway and Wales. The subjects of the two first are grand and picturesque,

and there is *his* genuine vein in them; but these are not interesting, and do not, like his other poems, touch any passion; our human feelings, which he masters at will in his fine pieces, are not here affected. Who can care through what horrors a Runic savage arrived at all the joys and glories they could conceive,—the supreme felicity of boozing ale out of the skull of an enemy in Odin's Hall?"

In 1761, Gray wrote the Epitaph on Sir William Peere Williams, who fell in the course of the protracted and desperate hostilities on the coast of Brittany, which preceded the conquest of Bellisle. With what reluctance Gray put his hand even to so simple an effort in verse, and how poorly he satisfied himself with the result, appear from a letter to Mason: "Mr. Montagu (as I guess at your instigation) has earnestly desired me to write some lines to be put on a monument which he means to erect at Bellisle. It is a task I do not love, knowing Sir William Williams so slightly as I did; but he is so friendly a person, and his affections seemed to me so real, that I could not refuse him. I have sent him the following verses, which I neither

like myself, nor will he, I doubt; however, I have showed him that I wished to oblige him."

The quiet routine of Gray's life, during this unproductive period of it, was varied by few events or change of employment. In 1757 he declined the office of Poet-Laureate, which was offered to him on the death of Cibber, whose name is coupled with his in the satirical line, which speaks of the laurel as

"Profaned by Cibber and contemned by Gray."

He was actuated, there is reason to think, not so much by contempt, as by an unwillingness, which appears throughout his literary career, to being put forward publicly in any thing like a professional position as a poet. His good judgment led him rather to the hope that an ancient poetic honour might be retrieved from ridicule,—a hope that was fulfilled in the last century, when the laureateship was given to Thomas Warton, and lately when it took a higher dignity from Southey and from Wordsworth. Gray, writing to Mason, said: "If you hear who it is given to, pray let me know; for I interest myself a little in the history of it, and rather

wish somebody may accept it that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Rowe was, I think, the last man of character that had it; Eusden was a person of great hopes in his youth, though at last he turned out a drunken parson; Dryden was as disgraceful to the office, from his character, as the poorest scribbler could have been from his verses."

In 1758 Gray gives this description of his life: "The drift of my present studies is to know, wherever I am, what lies within reach that may be worth seeing; whether it be building, ruin, park, garden, prospect, picture, or monument: to whom it does or has belonged, and what has been the characteristic and taste of different ages." He was then engaged in compiling "A Catalogue of the Antiquities, Houses, &c., in England and Wales," which, after his death, was printed for private distribution. Architecture was also one of his special studies, to which he applied himself with much of the scientific research and artistic feeling which have been displayed more effectively in the ecclesiology of his countrymen of a later

generation. When the British Museum, which had been founded by Parliament on the several private collections of Cotton, Sloane, and Harley, was opened in January, 1759, Gray went to London to explore the manuscript treasures. He writes thence: "I live in the Museum, and write volumes of antiquity. * * I am up to my ears."

It was not until he was about fifty years of age that Gray began that series of tours in Great Britain, of which there is so much pleasing record in his letters and diaries, and which, one cannot but believe, would, at an earlier part of his career, have exercised a most salutary influence upon his character, both as a man and a poet. In 1764 he went to the sea-side on the south of England, in the neighbourhood of the Isle of Wight; and afterwards visited Salisbury and Stonehenge. In the summer of 1765 he took a journey into Scotland, where at Edinburgh his acquaintance with Beattie began; he made an excursion into the Highlands as far as the pass of Killikrankie, and, describing his tour to Dr. Wharton, says in conclusion: "In short, since I saw the Alps, I have seen nothing sublime till now." He spent the spring-season of

the next year in Kent, where his eye enjoyed the garden-like beauties of the landscape of the more cultivated region of England. It was then that he threw off at Denton the "Impromptu" stanzas on the house which Lord Holland had built at Kingsgate, in imitation of Cicero's Formian villa at Baiæ. In one of his letters, he says: "I did *not* go to Kingsgate, because it belonged to my Lord Holland; but to Ramsgate I did, and so to Sandwich, and Deal, and Dover, and Folkstone, and Hythe, all along the coast, very delightful." The summer of 1767 was spent by Gray in the north of England. After a few weeks of confinement by ill-health in London, in the autumn he returned to his quiet abode at Cambridge,—where he writes, in midwinter: "Alas! I am a summer-bird, and can only sit drooping till the sun returns."

In the following year Gray received the appointment to the Professorship of Modern History in the University of Cambridge,—the most distinguished tribute which, in life, was given to his talents and learning. Six years before, "being," as he says, "cockered and spirited up by some

friends," he had applied to Lord Bute for the same Regius professorship; but was little surprised at an unfavourable answer. When, after the several changes in the ministry at that period, the Duke of Grafton had become first Lord of the Treasury, the professorship was, in 1768, made a gift to Gray under the most gratifying circumstances. He thus describes them to Beattie: "The middle of last summer his majesty was pleased to appoint me Regius Professor of Modern History in this University; it is the best thing the crown has to bestow (on a layman) here; the salary is £400 per annum; but what enhances the value of it to me is, that it was bestowed without being asked. The person who held it before me died on the Sunday, and on Wednesday following the Duke of Grafton wrote me a letter, to say that the king offered me this office, with many additional expressions of kindness on his grace's part, to whom I am but little known, and whom I have not seen, either before or since he did me this favour. Instances of a benefit so nobly conferred, I believe, are rare; and therefore I tell you of it as a thing that does honour, not only to me, but to the min-

ister. As I lived here before from choice, I shall now continue to do so from obligation."

If this appointment had come earlier in life, or when his health was unimpaired, it might have exerted a decided influence on Gray's life, by giving to it a more definite purpose. It came, however, too late. In justice to the memory of Gray, it must be added that he proved his sense of official duty by preparing a plan of his inauguration speech, on the preparatory and auxiliary studies for a course of Modern History; he also planned regulations of instruction in the department. The inaugural speech was to be in Latin, and the part which he wrote is preserved. In adding this to the story of Gray's unaccomplished labours, we can only regret that circumstances were not more propitious for the qualities which he would have brought to the exposition of History—zeal in historic research, impatience of secondary and superficial authorities, sagacity, and imaginative vision of the past,—and which might have given him the celebrity that, since his day, has been gained by Smyth in the same department of the same University, and by Arnold at Oxford.

Although the appointment was unproductive of its peculiarly appropriate results, it was rendered memorable, in its indirect influences, in the prompting of that poem which was grandly to close Gray's poetic life,—the Ode on the Installation of the Duke of Grafton to the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge, to which, in 1769, he was elected on the death of the Duke of Newcastle. Gratitude for the unsolicited kindness of his patron was the happy inspiration: "I thought myself," he wrote to Beattie, "bound in gratitude to his grace, unasked, to take upon me the task of writing these verses, which are usually set to music on this occasion. I do not think them worth sending you, because they are by nature doomed to live but a single day; or, if their existence is prolonged beyond that date, it is only by means of newspaper parodies and witless criticisms. This sort of abuse I had reason to expect, but did not think it worth while to avoid." To another correspondent he says: "I did not intend the duke should have heard me till he could not help it. You are desired to make the best excuses you can to his grace for the liberty I have taken of praising him to his face; but as

somebody was necessarily to do this, I did not see why Gratitude should sit silent and leave it to Expectation to sing, who certainly would have sung, and that *à gorge deployée* upon such an occasion." It is pleasing to think that a poem, prompted by so pure a motive, and of the permanence of which the poet had such humble expectations, should have gained and kept so true a fame, and that the last sounds of his lyric song should have been among the noblest. Mr. Hallam's calm judgment has applauded "that beautiful stanza, where he has made the founders of Cambridge pass before our eyes, like shadows over a magic glass." (Constit. Hist. i. p. 49.) And Coleridge, who was disposed to look rather unfavourably on the other lyrics, as frigid and artificial, said: "I think there is something very majestic in Gray's Installation Ode." It is another specimen of that admirable form of historical lyrical poetry, which the poet had achieved in "The Bard;" and was in harmony with his new duties in the appointment, which was the origin of the poem. The Installation Ode, as its title, "Ode for Music," shows, was set to music,—the poet himself giving counsel in the work, as on a former occasion, when,

on the proposal of a pupil of Handel's to set "The Bard" to music, Gray gave his own directions for the overture.

In the autumn of 1769, Gray made his tour to the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland,—that beautiful region, then little known, even to his own countrymen, but which in later times has been the life-long home of great poets, who with the bodily and spiritual vision beholding the beauties of earth and sky there, and making them famous and familiar, have hence taught their fellow-beings throughout the world a deeper insight into God's dealings with the soul of man by the agency of Nature. Of Gray's tour to the lakes, a more complete and pleasing record is preserved than of his other travels, in the journal which he kept and communicated to Dr. Wharton.

In 1770 Gray planned more travels, "having," he said, "never found my spirits lower than at present; and feeling that motion and change of scene is absolutely necessary to me." To his young Swiss friend, Bonstetten, he writes: "Your letter has made me happy, as happy as so gloomy, so solitary a being as I am, is capable of being made.

* As often as I read over your truly kind letter, written long since from London, I stop at these words: 'La mort qui peut glacer nos bras avant qu'ils soient entrelacées.'" In the summer of that year he made what he describes as "a six weeks' ramble through five of the most beautiful counties in the kingdom," in the course of which he viewed with especial delight the scenery of the river Wye, "the sylvan Wye—the wanderer among the woods," and the ruins of Tintern Abbey, and spent a short time at Oxford, "with," as he says, "great satisfaction."

This was Gray's last tour. In 1771 he had some hope of a visit to Switzerland; but the uncertain restoration produced by travelling, and the strictly temperate habits of his life, could not check the onward progress of his disease. After spending a little while in London and at Kensington, he returned to Cambridge; and on the 24th of July, while at dinner in the college-hall, was seized with an attack of gout in the stomach, which was followed by convulsions, and on the evening of the 30th he expired, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. One of the friends, who watched by his death-

bed, writes that he was sensible of his approaching death, and all was "peaceable and calm." His body was removed from Pembroke-Hall, and buried in obedience to the following article in his will, which was dated the 2d of July, 1770: "First, I do desire that my body may be deposited in the vault, made by my late dear mother, in the churchyard of Stoke-Pogeis, near Stough in Buckinghamshire, by her remains." The tomb is at the end of the chancel; and the Rev. Mr. Mitford, in the biography of Gray, published at Eton in 1847, remarks: "It is singular, that no tomb or monument has been erected to his memory; a small stone, inserted lately in the wall of the church, is the only memorial which indicates the spot where the poet's dust reposes."

A monument, in Westminster Abbey, was erected in memory of Gray, in 1778, by his friend and biographer Mason, with a metrical inscription from his pen. In 1799, a cenotaph "in honour of Thomas Gray" was placed by Mr. Penn on his grounds in Stoke Park, at a short distance from the churchyard, and in sight of the poet's grave.

Of Gray's personal appearance no description has been handed down, either by his first biographer or any of the other friends who were familiar with it. There is no portrait which pictures with authority his face in adult life. For this edition, the earliest picture of him,—that by Richardson, taken when he was fifteen years old,—has been preferred, both as the most agreeable likeness, and as entitled to most esteem from the reputation of the artist.

In this biography of Gray, it has been my aim so to compose it that the poet's character might be apparent therein, without comment. The course of his life is as well known as we need desire it to be, for it quickly found an affectionate and honest chronicler; and what was left untouched by Mason has been well supplied by the zealous industry of later biographers. Indeed, the poet's own letters contain the story of his life. On that life there rests no stain of moral reproach. He was innocent, modest, gentle; and while, content and happy in unambitious seclusion, he shunned the large fellowship of men, he had qualities

which caused the friends, who knew him best, to cling to him fondly and faithfully. Of Gray's religious principles and practice much is not directly known; the reserve in his character prevented those subjects being prominent, either in his conversation or correspondence; and his friends have said little. It must be remembered, that the age in which he and his friends lived was a lukewarm era of the Church of England,—nay, worse, it was an age of dull and torpid faith. It was just at the time when Gray was passing from boyhood to manhood, that Bishop Butler, in 1736, wrote that dismal sentence in the preface to "The Analogy": "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and, accordingly, they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world." The soul of Gray dwelt far above such

spiritual debasement. Although devotional fervour was not an element of his character, it was very manifest, and often so, that he held in abhorrence the folly and vice of the insolent scepticism of the times, come from what quarter it might,—whether English, Scotch, French, or Prussian infidelity. He saw, and took pains to teach others to see, how shallow was the poor philosophy of Shaftesbury and of Bolingbroke; of the Scotch epicurean he said: "I have always thought David Hume a pernicious writer, and believe he has done as much mischief here as he has in his own country;"—of the royal infidel he spoke with a wise contempt (in 1760): "The town are reading the King of Prussia's poetry (Le Philosophe sans souci), and I have done like the town; they do not seem so sick of it as I am. It is all the scum of Voltaire and Bolingbroke, the *crambe recocta* of our worst Freethinkers, tossed up in German-French rhyme." It was with a deeper feeling of aversion that he regarded the ribald French blasphemer, of whom he said, in one emphatic phrase, in one of his letters: "Voltaire I detest." An illustration of this feeling has been given by his friend, the Rev. Norton Nicholls, in

his "Reminiscences of Gray": "The great object of his detestation was Voltaire, whom he seemed to know, even beyond what had appeared of him, and to see with the eye of a prophet in his future mischiefs; he said to me, 'No one knows the mischief that man will do.' When I took leave of him, and saw him for the last time, at his lodging in Jermyn street, before I went abroad, in the beginning of June, 1771, he said: 'I have one thing to beg of you, which you must not refuse.' I replied, 'You know you have only to command, what is it?' 'Do not go to see Voltaire,' and then he added what I have written above. I said, 'Certainly, I will not; but what could a visit from me signify?' 'Every tribute to such a man signifies.'" (Gray's Works, Mitford's Aldine edit. vol. v. p. 32.)

The poetical character of Gray needs now no comment. The foundation, narrow as it is, on which his reputation was built, has borne it well for more than a century. There is probably no instance in the history of English literature, in which distinction was gained by such scant production; and yet no one can complain that Gray's reputation is disproportioned to his deserts. It is a reputa-

tion which would be a paradox on any other principle than that his poems, limited though they be in number, gave space enough to show true imaginative power, and have been to several generations a source of that kind of delight which it belongs to genuine poetry to give.

The student of English poetry who judges most justly of Gray's character as a poet will not be disposed to question his reputation or to disparage it; but another feeling will rise up, somewhat in the form of complaint, in the thought that Gray might have been a much greater poet,—that he ought to have achieved that higher order of reputation which is fame. Speculations of this kind have something vain in them; for, unless the life be closed too early, or forced from its natural course by sadly adverse influences, it may be said, that what a man does is the measure of what he can do. In reading Gray's poetry, however, and in studying his natural endowments, and following the large circuit of his acquirements and the course of his life, there rises up to our thoughts the vision of a greater poet, which we cannot but fancy ought to have been in him a reality. Mason

said of him, after his death, that "from early chagrin and disappointment, Gray had imbibed a disinclination to employ his talents beyond the sphere of self-satisfaction and improvement." This is language more amiably than wisely apologetic. The work of human life is not to be made dependent, at our will, upon our lives being fenced in from pain and sorrow, and the evils that life is heir to. The story of Gray's life justifies no such apology. After making the largest allowances for the injury done by the dismal recollections of his father, and the lesser wrong of the quarrel with his youthful fellow traveller,—the commonest of life's disappointments,—there is nothing to show why Gray's life should not have been happy. In truth, it was a happy life. He never knew poverty, but had means ample enough to secure the home and the occupation that were congenial to him; and, at every period of his life, he was blessed with friends who were dear and true to him. If an early sorrow struck the poet's sensitive heart, there was in after-life much more than the healing hand of time to cure the wound; even if the early sorrow had weighed longer and heavier, it would

have been a poor plea for inaction. It has been wisely said, that "if the early direction given to life has been ever so unfortunate, a man's folding his hands over it in melancholy mood, and suffering himself to be made a puppet by it, is a sadly weak proceeding. Most thoughtful men have probably some dark fountains in their souls, by the side of which, if there were time, and it were decorous, they could let their thoughts sit down and wail indefinitely." (Friends in Council, Part I. p. 198.) If the life of Gray be compared with the lives of other men, illustrious in English letters, the adverse circumstances of it fade away into an insignificance which makes the comparison a reproach to him. The sorrows that fell on the path of Spenser did not silence his spiritual song; the gloom which sublimely enveloped the old age of Milton,—"darkness before and danger's voice behind,"—was no temptation to sullen speechlessness; the obloquy which for years was heaped on Wordsworth oppressed not his high-souled minstrelsy; and the exquisite humour of Charles Lamb was not quenched by the fearful tragedy of his early manhood, and the awful affliction that hung over his whole life.

Gray's dejection had its source, not so much in outward causes as in the fountain that is within,—a constitutional tendency to low spirits, which he often yielded to, and which he evaded rather than overcame. He never learned a later poet's truer wisdom, that

> "A cheerful spirit is what the Muses love,
> A soaring spirit is their prime delight."

Even before his health was impaired, he said (in 1758), "High spirits and gaiety overpower me, and entirely take away mine." Gray's scheme of life was innocent and in itself rational; but it was inadequate to his powers, and lower than a better faith in his own impulses would have dictated. He was studious, zealous of a varied lore, and devoted to knowledge with no mean or mercenary motive, but for its own sake. His occupation was pure and intelligent employment, for his own happiness; but it was not strenuous and dutiful culture of his talents, for the happiness and good of mankind. "To find one's self business," he said, "I am persuaded, is the great art of life: * * some spirit, something of genius (more than common) is re-

quired, to teach a man how to employ himself; I say a man; for women, commonly speaking, never feel this distemper; they have always something to do; time hangs not on their hands (unless they be fine ladies); a variety of small inventions and occupations fill up the void, and their eyes are never open in vain." Again: "I am persuaded the whole matter is, to have always something going forward. Happy they that can create a rose-tree or erect a honeysuckle; that can watch the brood of a hen, or see a fleet of their own ducklings launch into the water!" This is good teaching in the minor morals of life, and by virtue of it, many a man and many a woman spend their days in harmless cheerfulness and secluded usefulness; but when life is endowed with higher powers, higher and larger functions become a duty. Creative energy is bound to find its fitting work, and the aim of it should be the welfare of humanity, and, in its loftiest aspirations, the glory of God. Gray's pursuits, for the most part, looked not beyond the storing or the refreshing of his own mind,—recreation in its highest and most honourable form; but yet, inasmuch as it stopped at that point, having

the taint (loth as one is to say so) of a refined selfishness. His industry, zealous and untiring as it was, needed the guidance of a more practical philosophy, and still more of a more strenuous sense of duty, for lack of which his labours were too often like those parts of the old mansion-house at Stoke, which his own line describes as

"———passages that lead to nothing."

Besides his learning in pure literature in its various branches—both ancient and modern,—Gray had an accurate knowledge of architecture and the fine arts, and of music; he was a master of heraldry and archæology; and in the natural sciences—botany and zoology—he was a successful student, both from books and from nature. But these multifarious acquirements were amusements, which gave him indeed, and perhaps justly, the credit of being the most learned English poet since Milton; but which have left no substantial results beyond notes and "papers" on the several sciences,—comments on Greek philosophers and dramatists,—and a scheme of a "History of English Poetry," for which he was eminently qualified, but which he readily relinquished

on hearing that Warton was engaged on a similar work.

Gray said of Mason, that he read too little and wrote too much. Of himself, the reverse may be said with equal truth. He would have been a happier man in writing more. To Walpole, he remarked: "Whenever the humour takes me I will write; because I like it, and because I like myself better when I do so." The happiness would doubtless have been heightened, if that which was humour had been disciplined into habit. Not only might the poet have thus been a happier man, but each poetic power in him would have gained strength from the free discipline which belongs to the thoughtful use of any faculty. His fine use of the English language, which has made so many of his lines and expressions familiar in their beauty, might have risen to that admirable freedom and peculiar mastery which is one of the attributes of poets of the highest order.

Gray needed a freer communion with his fellow-beings and with nature. There is, indeed, a kind of character, for which a cloistered academic seclusion may be salutary discipline; but there is

another description of character, which needs larger intercourse with the world, to save it from that fastidiousness and daintiness which is engendered by the self-indulgence of mere taste for literature and art, and which borders on effeminacy. Tenderly as Gray, both in verse and prose, touches on human nature, combined with that delicacy were a manliness and good sense which, with larger culture, might have expanded into a higher philosophy of human principles and passions. His moral and historical odes show the wisdom he might have brought to the poetic dealing with humanity.

The freer communion with nature which, for bodily health, Gray sought in his later years, had it been earlier, and in the dutiful and believing spirit of poetical culture, might have placed him among our great descriptive poets of nature. His poems show (and often in the fine power of a single line) with what poetic truthfulness he observed and reproduced the sights and sounds of nature; and, still more, that he could invest the material world with that spirituality which the moral imagination creates or discovers. His letters and diaries also show, when he went forth from what he playfully calls "the

quiet ugliness of Cambridge," with what true poetic vision he beheld natural objects—the humbler as well as the mightier—and that his cloistered, bookish life had not destroyed his susceptibility to either the more delicate or the stronger influences of nature. It is in the half-careless addition of a postscript to a letter, that with such grandeur and truth he describes an ocean sunrise; having reached the sea-coast after travelling before daybreak, with "the moon shining through a dark and misty autumnal air," he adds: "I saw the clouds and dark vapours open gradually to right and left, rolling over one another in great smoky wreaths, and the tide (as it flowed gently in upon the sands) first whitening, then slightly tinged with gold and blue; and, all at once, a little line of insufferable brightness, that (before I can write these five words) was grown to half an orb, and now to a whole one, too glorious to be distinctly seen. It is very odd it makes no figure on paper; yet, I shall remember it as long as the sun, or at least as long as I endure." In a letter from Stoke, he adds a postscript, simply to say: "Every thing resounds with the wood-lark and robin; and the voice of the sparrow is heard in

our land." The journal of his tour to the lakes shows, besides his admiration of the grander spectacles, that he was observant of the delicate phenomena of a mountain-lake region, such as the night voice of the lesser water-falls—what, in the descriptive poetry of a later day, a dweller among the mountains has sung of, as "the unremitting voice of nightly streams"—"that voice of unpretending harmony," when

> "A soft and lulling sound is heard
> Of streams inaudible by day."

In the history of English poetry, Gray occupies a place in that transitional era of the middle of the eighteenth century, between the artificial school of poetry of the followers and imitators of Pope, and the revival which, beginning with Cowper and Burns at the close of the century, has been achieved by the greater poets of the nineteenth century. Gray shares with Thomson the honour of leading the way to the restoration of English poetry to nature again. In this work, he was strengthened, more than Thomson, by the assurance which his learning gave, that the revival was but a return to the teach-

ings of the earlier and greatest of the English poets.

The authorities which have been relied on in this memoir of Gray, are chiefly his own letters; the Life by Mason; Matthias's Edition of his Works; the Rev. Mr. Mitford's Aldine Edition, with the excellent biography prefixed; and also Mr. Mitford's later biography of the poet, contained in the illustrated Eton Edition of the Poems. To Mr. Mitford, the author of the latest and most complete of the biographies, peculiarly belongs the distinction of being the best and most judicious guardian of Gray's memory. It appears to have been for many years a labour of love to him; and the large research he has bestowed on it, and the kindly wisdom with which he has treated the subject, place every reader of Gray's poems and letters under obligations to him.

The notes, illustrative of the poems, will be found in this edition at the close of the volume.

Philadelphia, July 1, 1850.

COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Sonnet

BY THE REV. JOHN MITFORD, M.A.

Stanzas

BY THE REV. JOHN MOULTRIE, M.A.

SONNET.

A LONELY man he was from whom these lays
Flow'd in his cloister'd musings: He in scorn
Held them, the unfeeling multitude, who, born
For deeds of nobler purpose, their rife days
Waste amidst fraudful industry, to raise
Inglorious wealth.—But He, life's studious morn
Gave to the Muse, so best might he adorn
His thoughtful brow with never-dying bays.
And well the Muse repaid him. She hath given
An unsubstantial world of richer fee;

High thoughts, unchanging visions, that the leaven
Of earth partake not;—Rich then must he be,
Who of this cloudless world, this mortal heaven
Possesseth in his right the sovereignty.

STANZAS.

I.

SEED-time and harvest, summer's genial heat,
And winter's nipping cold, and night and day
Their stated changes, as of old, repeat,
And must, until this world shall pass away;
While nations rise, and flourish, and decay,
And mighty revolutions shake the earth,
Filling men's hearts with trouble and dismay;
And war and rapine, pestilence and dearth,
To many a monstrous shape of pain and wo give birth.

II.

But still, while states and empires wax and wane,
And busy generations fret and die,
The face of Nature doth unchanged remain;
Small token is there in the earth or sky
Of dissolution or mortality,
But streams are bright, and meadows flowery still,
And woods retain their ancient greenery,
And shade and sunshine chequer dale and hill,
Though all the abodes of men be rife with wrong and ill.

III.

There is no feature of thy fair domain
Which of decay or change displays a trace,
No charm of thine but doth undimm'd remain,
O Thou my boyhood's blest abiding-place,
While five-and-twenty years with stealthy pace
Have cool'd thy son's rash blood, and thinn'd his hair;
The old expression lingers on thy face,
The spirit of past days unquench'd is there,
While all things else are changed, and changing everywhere.

IV.

And through thy spacious courts, and o'er thy green
Irriguous meadows, swarming as of old,
A youthful generation still is seen,
Of birth, of mind, of humour manifold:
The grave, the gay, the timid, and the bold,—
The noble nursling of the palace hall,—
The merchant's offspring, heir to wealth untold,—
The pale-eyed youth, whom learning's spells enthral,
Within thy cloisters meet, and love thee, one and all.

V.

Young art thou still, and young shalt ever be
In spirit, as thou wast in years gone by;
The present, past, and future blend in thee,
Rich as thou art in names which cannot die,
And youthful hearts already beating high
To emulate the glories won of yore;
That days to come may still the past outvie,
And thy bright roll be lengthen'd more and more
Of statesman, bard, and sage well versed in noblest lore.

VI.

Ah! well, I ween, knew He what worth is thine,
How deep a debt to thee his genius owed,—
The Statesman, who of late, in life's decline,
Of public care threw off the oppressive load,
While yet his unquench'd spirit gleam'd and glow'd
With the pure light of Greek and Roman song,—
That gift, in boyish years by thee bestow'd,
And cherish'd, loved, and unforgotten long
While cares of state press'd round in close continuous throng.

VII.

Not unprepared was that majestic mind,
By food and nurture once derived from thee,
To shape and sway the fortunes of mankind;
And by sagacious counsel and decree
Direct and guide Britannia's destiny—
Her mightiest ruler o'er the subject East:
Yet in his heart of hearts no joy had he
So pure, as when, from empire's yoke released,
To thee once more he turned with love that never ceased.

VIII.

Fain would he cast life's fleshly burden down
Where its best hours were spent, and sink to rest,
Weary of greatness, sated with renown,
Like a tired child upon his mother's breast:
Proud may'st thou be of that his fond bequest,
Proud that, within thy consecrated ground,
He sleeps amidst the haunts he loved the best;
Where many a well-known, once-familiar sound
Of water, earth, and air for ever breathes around.

IX.

Such is thine empire over mightiest souls
Of men who wield earth's sceptres; such thy spell
Which until death, and after death controls
Hearts which no fear could daunt, no force could quell:
What marvel then, if softer spirits dwell
With fondest love on thy remember'd sway?
What marvel, if the hearts of poets swell,
Recording at life's noon, with grateful lay,
How sweetly in thy shades its morning slipp'd away?

X.

Such tribute paid thee once, in pensive strains,
One mighty in the realm of lyric song,—
A ceaseless wanderer through the wide domains
Of thought, which to the studious soul belong;—
One far withdrawn from this world's busy throng,
And seeking still, in academic bowers,
A safe retreat from tumult, strife, and wrong;
Where, solacing with verse his lonely hours,
He wove these fragrant wreaths of amaranthine flowers.

XI.

To him, from boyhood to life's latest hour,
The passion, kindled first beside the shore
Of thine own Thames, retain'd its early power;
'Twas his with restless footsteps to explore
All depths of ancient and of modern lore;
With unabated love to feed the eye
Of silent thought on the exhaustless store
Of beauty, which the gifted may descry
In all the teeming land of fruitful phantasy.

XII.

To him the Grecian muse, devoutly woo'd,
Unveil'd her beauty, and entranced his ear,
In many a rapt imaginative mood,
With harmony which only Poets hear
Even in that old enchanted atmosphere:
To him the painter's and the sculptor's art
Disclosed those hidden glories, which appear
To the clear vision of the initiate heart
In contemplation calm, from worldly care apart.

XIII.

Nor lack'd he the profounder, purer sense
Of beauty, in the face of Nature seen;
But loved the mountain's rude magnificence,
The valley's glittering brooks, and pastures green,
Moonlight, and morn, and sunset's golden sheen,
The stillness and the storm of lake and sea,
The hedgerow elms, with grass-grown lanes between,
The winding footpath, the broad, bowery tree,
The deep, clear river's course, majestically free.

XIV.

Such were his haunts in recreative hours,
To such he fondly turn'd, from time to time,
From Granta's cloister'd courts and gloomy towers,
And stagnant Camus' circumambient slime;
Well pleased o'er Cambria's mountain-peaks to climb,
Or, with a larger, more adventurous range,
Plant his bold steps on Alpine heights sublime,
And gaze on Nature's wonders vast and strange;
Then roam through the rich South with swift and ceaseless change.

XV.

Yet with his settled and habitual mood
Accorded better the green English vale,
The pastoral mead, the cool sequester'd wood,
The spacious park fenced in with rustic pale,
The pleasant interchange of hill and dale,
The churchyard darken'd by the yew-tree's shade,
And rich with many a rudely-sculptured tale
Of friends beneath its turf sepulchral laid,
Of human tears that flow, of earthly hopes that fade.

XVI.

Such were the daily scenes with which he fed
The pensive spirit first awoke by Thee;
And blest and blameless was the life he led,
Soothed by the gentle spells of poesy.
Nor yet averse to stricter thought was he,
Nor uninstructed in abstruser lore;
But now, with draughts of pure philosophy
Quench'd his soul's thirst,—now ventured to explore
The fields by science own'd, and taste the fruits they bore.

XVII.

With many a graceful fold of learned thought
He wrapp'd himself around, well pleased to shroud
His spirit, in the web itself had wrought,
From the rude pressure of the boisterous crowd;
Nor loftier purpose cherish'd or avow'd,
Nor claim'd the prophet's or the teacher's praise;
Content in studious ease to be allow'd
With nice artistic craft to weave his lays,
And lose himself at will in song's melodious maze.

XVIII.

Slow to create, fastidious to refine,
He wrought and wrought with labour long and sore,
Adjusting word by word, and line by line,
Each thought, each phrase remoulding o'er and o'er,
Till art could polish and adorn no more,
And stifled fancy sank beneath the load
Of gorgeous words and decorative lore,
In rich profusion on each verse bestow'd,
To grace the shrine wherein the poet's soul abode.

XIX.

And was his mission thus fulfill'd on earth?
For no sublimer use the powers design'd
Which liberal Nature gave him at his birth,
And life-long culture ripen'd and refined?
Owed he no more to Heaven or to mankind
Than these few notes of desultory song?—
Nay, slight we not Heaven's boon, nor strive to find
Occasion to impeach the bard of wrong,
Whose strains, a deathless gift, to us and ours belong!

XX.

If rather for himself, a pilgrim lone
Through this cold world, he sang to cheer his way
And soothe his soul with music all its own,
Than in didactic numbers to convey
Wisdom and truth to minds from both astray,—
If little reck'd he of his task divine,
Man's subject spirit to instruct and sway,—
'Twas that as yet from Poesy's bright shrine
The light which warms our day had scarce begun to shine.

XXI.

Thought hath its changeful periods, like the deep,
Of calm and tempest, tumult and repose;
And 'twas on times of intellectual sleep
That the faint day-spring of his genius rose:
Man's mind lay sunk awhile in slumberous dose,
Its surface yet unruffled by the breeze
Which should ere long its hidden depths disclose,
And wake to feverish life of fell disease
New swarms of embryo creeds and crude philosophies.

XXII.

Years came and went;—beside the Poet's tomb
The flowers of many a spring had bloom'd and died,
When times of fierce convulsion, rage, and gloom
Arose, and shook the nations far and wide.
O then, my Mother, by the verdant side
Of thy bright river, lost in dreamy mood,
Was seen a stripling pale and lustrous-eyed,
Who far apart his lonely path pursued,
And seem'd in sullen guise o'er troublous thoughts to brood.

XXIII.

Small sympathy he own'd or felt, I ween,
With sports and pastimes of his young compeers,
Nor mingling in their studies oft was seen,
Nor shared their joys or sorrows, hopes or fears:
Pensive he was, and grave beyond his years,
And happiest seem'd when in some shady nook
(His wild sad eyes suffused with silent tears)
O'er some mysterious and forbidden book
He pored, until his frame with strong emotion shook.

CHURCH PORCH, STOKE.

XXIV.

Strange were his studies, and his sports no less.
Full oft, beneath the blazing summer noon,
The sun's convergent rays, with dire address,
He turn'd on some old tree, and burnt it soon
To ashes; oft at eve the fire-balloon,
Inflated by his skill, would mount on high;
And when tempestuous clouds had veil'd the moon,
And lightning rent, and thunder shook the sky,
He left his bed, to gaze on Nature's revelry.

XXV.

A great, a gifted, but a turbid soul
Struggled and chafed within that stripling's breast,—
Passion which none might conquer or control,
And feeling too intense to be repress'd:
His spirit was on fire, and could not rest
Through that fierce thirst for perfect truth and love
By which, as by a spell, it seem'd possest;
And long, and oft, and vainly still he strove
To realize on earth what only dwells above.

XXVI.

To him ideal beauty had unveil'd
In blissful vision her immortal face:
Alas! what marvel if on earth he fail'd
The footsteps of that glorious form to trace?
What marvel that to him all things seem'd base,
Disorder'd, and corrupt? and when he sought
Hope for himself, and healing for his race,
Even in the creeds by Christian doctors taught,
How cold to him appear'd the comfort which they
brought!

XXVII.

The thing which is, and that which ought to be!—
The Gospel and the Church!—the precept given,
And act perform'd!—alas! he seem'd to see
Things unlike each to each, as earth to heaven!—
And thus from depth to depth of error driven,
Through truth blasphemed, a devious course he ran,
His brain o'erwrought, his proud heart rent and riven
By bootless strife,—a rash misguided man,
Farther from peace at last, than when his quest began.

XXVIII.

Yet in a world of beauty dwelt he still,
Entranced in visions wonderful and bright,
Which by strong magic he evoked at will
From his soul's teeming depths;—no mortal wight
E'er ruled with more supreme resistless might
The wizard realm of fancy; mortal words
Did ne'er such music with such thought unite,
As flow'd beneath his touch from mystic chords,
Whose harmony none wake but song's most gifted lords.

XXIX.

Thus with a prophet's heart, a prophet's tone,
Uttering his fitful oracles he stood
Midst scorn and hatred, dauntless, though alone;
A marvel to the wicked, by the good
Pitied and shunn'd, and where least understood
Most strongly censured.—Peace be with his dust!
Nor be his faults relentlessly pursued
By reprobation of the wise and just,
Who feel themselves but men, and their own hearts distrust.

XXX.

But Thou, O nurse and guide of youthful thought,
Wast Thou all guiltless of thy son's decline
From wisdom's ways?—was no dark mischief wrought
In that wild heart through any fault of thine?
Didst thou so well perform thy task divine
To him and his compeers,—so well instil
By precept upon precept, line on line,
Eternal truth, that Nature's inborn ill
Might not uncheck'd, unchanged, its wayward course fulfil?

XXXI.

Nay, Mother, veil thy face, and meekly own
Thy much unfaithfulness in years gone by;—
Thy altar cold—Heaven's light but faintly shown—
Truth, in thy charge, itself become a lie,
Which, even to boyhood's unsuspicious eye,
At once lay bare and flagrant.—Well indeed
Might faith and hope beneath thy nurture die,
So rudely oft it crush'd the expanding seed,
And quench'd the smoking flax, and broke the bruised reed.

XXXII.

Those days we trust are ended; and do Thou
Take heed lest they return, and thy last state
Be worse than was thy first. With reverence bow
Before GOD'S throne, and on His bidding wait:
So be thy sons for ever good and great,
The glory and the strength of this our isle;
And Thou still fresh at Time's remotest date,
While Thames shall flow, and thy green meadows
smile,
And youthful sports, as now, the youthful heart beguile.

POEMS.

ODE ON THE SPRING.

Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring:
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,

Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark, how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect-youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon:
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gayly-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of Man:
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the Busy and the Gay
But flutter through life's little day,

In Fortune's varying colours drest:
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chill'd by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.

SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF MR. RICHARD WEST.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join;
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire:
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require:
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men:
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear:
To warm their little loves the birds complain:
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

ODE

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

Ἀνθρωπος, ἱκανὴ πρόφασις εἰς τὸ δυστυχεῖν.
Menander. Incert. Fragm. ver. 382, ed. Cler. p. 245.

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the watery glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!

Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some on earnest business bent
Their murmuring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:

ETON COLLEGE.

Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry:
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly the approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see, how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate,

And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murtherous band!
Ah, tell them, they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,

And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo! in the vale of years beneath
A griesly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo! Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemn'd alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
The unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more;—where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

—Ζῆνα—
. . . . . .
Τὸν φρονεῖν Βροτοὺς ὁδώ-
σαντα, τῷ πάθει μαθὼν
Θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.
ÆSCH. AGAM. ver. 181.

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,

To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
And bade to form her infant mind.
Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore:
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse, and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe;
By vain Prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd,
Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
And Melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend:
Warm Charity, the general friend,
With Justice, to herself severe,
And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh! gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess, lay thy chastening hand!
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Not circled with the vengeful band
(As by the impious thou art seen),
With thundering voice, and threatening mien,
With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty:

Thy form benign, oh goddess, wear,
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there
To soften, not to wound, my heart.
The generous spark extinct revive,
Teach me to love, and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a Man.

ODE

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,

DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD FISHES.

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed; but midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled,)
The slippery verge her feet beguiled,
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mew'd to every watery God,
Some speedy aid to send.

No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd:
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,
Nor all, that glisters, gold.

ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

UPTON OLD CHURCH.

"The Ivy Mantled Tower."

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn:

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreaths its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies would he rove;
Now drooping, woful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

"The next, with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne:
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown:
Fair science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear,
He gain'd from heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

OMITTED STANZAS.

In Gray's first MS. of the "Elegy," after the eighteenth stanza, ending with the word "flame," were the four following stanzas:

The thoughtless world to majesty may bow,
Exalt the brave, and idolize success;
But more to innocence their safety owe,
Than power or genius e'er conspired to bless.

And thou who, mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these notes their artless tale relate,
By night and lonely contemplation led
To wander in the gloomy walks of fate:

Hark! how the sacred calm, that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease;
In still small accents whispering from the ground,
A grateful earnest of eternal peace.

No more, with reason and thyself at strife,
Give anxious cares and endless wishes room;
But through the cool sequester'd vale of life
Pursue the silent tenor of thy doom.

Here the poem was originally intended to conclude.

After the twenty-fifth stanza, ending with the word "lawn," was the following stanza:

Him have we seen the greenwood side along,
While o'er the heath we hied, our labour done,
Oft as the woodlark piped her farewell song,
With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun.

And in some of the first editions, immediately before "The Epitaph," was the following stanza:

There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

A LONG STORY.

In Britain's isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building stands:
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employ'd the power of fairy hands

To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each panel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.

Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls;
The seals and maces danced before him.

His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,
  His high-crown'd hat, and satin doublet,
Moved the stout heart of England's queen,
  Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

What, in the very first beginning!
  Shame of the versifying tribe!
Your history whither are you spinning?
  Can you do nothing but describe?

A house there is (and that's enough)
  From whence one fatal morning issues
A brace of warriors, not in buff,
  But rustling in their silks and tissues.

The first came cap-a-pee from France,
  Her conquering destiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye askance,
  And vainly ape her art of killing.

The other amazon kind heaven
  Had arm'd with spirit, wit, and satire;
But Cobham had the polish given,
  And tipp'd her arrows with good-nature.

MANOR HOUSE, STOKE PARK.

To celebrate her eyes, her air—
Coarse panegyrics would but tease her;
Melissa is her "nom de guerre."
Alas, who would not wish to please her!

With bonnet blue and capuchine,
And aprons long, they hid their armour;
And veil'd their weapons, bright and keen,
In pity to the country farmer.

Fame, in the shape of Mr. P—t,
(By this time all the parish know it,)
Had told that thereabouts there lurk'd
A wicked imp they call a poet:

Who prowl'd the country far and near,
Bewitch'd the children of the peasants,
Dried up the cows, and lamed the deer,
And suck'd the eggs, and kill'd the pheasants.

My lady heard their joint petition,
Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd issue out her high commission
To rid the manor of such vermin.

The heroines undertook the task,
Through lanes unknown, o'er stiles they ventured,
Rapp'd at the door, nor stay'd to ask,
But bounce into the parlour enter'd.

The trembling family they daunt,
They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they tattle,
Rummage his mother, pinch his aunt,
And up stairs in a whirlwind rattle:

Each hole and cupboard they explore,
Each creek and cranny of his chamber,
Run hurry-scurry round the floor,
And o'er the bed and tester clamber;

Into the drawers and china pry,
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio!
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
Or creased, like dogs-ears, in a folio.

On the first marching of the troops,
The Muses, hopeless of his pardon,
Convey'd him underneath their hoops
To a small closet in the garden.

So rumour says: (who will, believe.)
But that they left the door ajar,
Where, safe and laughing in his sleeve,
He heard the distant din of war.

Short was his joy. He little knew
The power of magic was no fable;
Out of the window, whisk, they flew,
But left a spell upon the table.

The words too eager to unriddle,
The poet felt a strange disorder;
Transparent bird-lime form'd the middle,
And chains invisible the border.

So cunning was the apparatus,
The powerful pot-hooks did so move him,
That, will he, nill he, to the great house
He went, as if the devil drove him.

Yet on his way (no sign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phœbus he preferr'd his case,
And begg'd his aid that dreadful day.

The godhead would have back'd his quarrel;
But with a blush, on recollection,
Own'd that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.

The court was sate, the culprit there,
Forth from their gloomy mansions creeping,
The lady Janes and Joans repair,
And from the gallery stand peeping:

Such as in silence of the night
Come (sweep) along some winding entry,
(Tyack has often seen the sight,)
Or at the chapel-door stand sentry.

In peaked hoods and mantles tarnish'd,
Sour visages, enough to scare ye,
High dames of honour once, that garnish'd
The drawing-room of fierce Queen Mary.

The peeress comes. The audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission:
She curtsies, as she takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.

The bard, with many an artful fib,
Had in imagination fenced him,
Disproved the arguments of Squib,
And all that Groom could urge against him.

But soon his rhetoric forsook him,
When he the solemn hall had seen;
A sudden fit of ague shook him,
He stood as mute as poor Macleane.

Yet something he was heard to mutter,
"How in the park beneath an old tree,
(Without design to hurt the butter,
Or any malice to the poultry,)

"He once or twice had penn'd a sonnet;
Yet hoped, that he might save his bacon:
Numbers would give their oaths upon it,
He ne'er was for a conjurer taken."

The ghostly prudes with hagged face
Already had condemn'd the sinner.
My lady rose, and with a grace—
She smiled, and bid him come to dinner.

"Jesu-Maria! Madam Bridget,
Why, what can the Viscountess mean?"
(Cried the square-hoods in woful fidget,)
"The times are alter'd quite and clean!

"Decorum's turn'd to mere civility;
Her air and all her manners show it.
Commend me to her affability!
Speak to a commoner and a poet!"

[Here five hundred stanzas are lost.]

And so God save our noble king,
And guard us from long-winded lubbers,
That to eternity would sing,
And keep my lady from her rubbers.

PINDARIC ODES.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

THE BARD.

Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν· ἐς
Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἑρμηνέων
Χατίζει. PINDAR. OL. II. V. 152.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

I. 1.

AWAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,

Through verdant dales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

I. 2.

Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the scepter'd hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing:
Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.

O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day;
With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare.
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II. 1.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.

Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky;
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

II. 2.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
The unconquerable Mind, and freedom's holy flame.

II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around:
Every shade and hallow'd fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,

What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretch'd forth his little arms and smiled.
"This pencil take, (she said,) whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

III. 2.

Nor second He, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of the abyss to spy.
He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear

Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding
pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah! 'tis heard no more——
Oh! lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air:
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

THE BARD.

I. 1.

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance:
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quivering lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er cold Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air,)
And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main:
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song

Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a griesly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

II. 1.

"Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright

The shrieks of death, through Berkley's roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with flight combined,
And sorrow's faded form, and solitude behind.

II. 2.

"Mighty victor, mighty lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;

Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl.
The rich repast prepare,
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled boar in infant-gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.

Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unbless'd, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height
Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2.

"Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;

And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air!
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-colour'd wings.

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again
Fierce war, and faithful love,
And truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale grief, and pleasing pain,
With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the cherub-choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,

That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me; with joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine despair, and sceptred care,
To triumph, and to die, are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

EPITAPH ON MRS. JANE CLERKE.

This lady, the wife of Dr. John Clerke, physician at Epsom, died April 27, 1757; and was buried in the church of Beckenham, Kent.

Lo! where this silent marble weeps,
A friend, a wife, a mother sleeps:
A heart, within whose sacred cell
The peaceful virtues loved to dwell.
Affection warm, and faith sincere,
And soft humanity were there.
In agony, in death resign'd,
She felt the wound she left behind,
Her infant image here below,
Sits smiling on a father's woe:

Whom what awaits, while yet he strays
Along the lonely vale of days?
A pang, to secret sorrow dear;
A sigh; an unavailing tear;
Till time shall every grief remove,
With life, with memory, and with love.

EPITAPH ON SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

HERE, foremost in the dangerous paths of fame,
Young Williams fought for England's fair renown;
His mind each Muse, each Grace adorn'd his frame,
Nor envy dared to view him with a frown.

At Aix, his voluntary sword he drew,
There first in blood his infant honour seal'd;
From fortune, pleasure, science, love, he flew,
And scorn'd repose when Britain took the field.

With eyes of flame, and cool undaunted breast,
Victor he stood on Bellisle's rocky steeps—
Ah, gallant youth! this marble tells the rest,
Where melancholy friendship bends, and weeps.

ODE FOR MUSIC.

I. AIR.

"Hence, avaunt, ('tis holy ground,)
Comus, and his midnight-crew,
And Ignorance with looks profound,
And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,
Mad Sedition's cry profane,
Servitude that hugs her chain,
Nor in these consecrated bowers,
Let painted Flattery hide her serpent-train in flowers.

CHORUS.

Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain,
Dare the Muse's walk to stain,
While bright-eyed Science watches round:
Hence, away, 'tis holy ground!"

II. RECITATIVE.

From yonder realms of empyrean day
Bursts on my ear the indignant lay:
There sit the sainted sage, the bard divine,
The few, whom genius gave to shine
Through every unborn age, and undiscover'd clime.
Rapt in celestial transport they:
Yet thither oft a glance from high
They send of tender sympathy
To bless the place, where on their opening soul
First the genuine ardour stole.
'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell,
And, as the choral warblings round him swell,
Meek Newton's self bends from his state sublime,
And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

III. AIR.

"Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
That contemplation loves,
Where willowy Camus lingers with delight!
Oft at the blush of dawn
I trod your level lawn,

Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy."

IV. RECITATIVE.

But hark! the portals sound, and pacing forth
With solemn steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
And mitred fathers in long order go:
Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow
From haughty Gallia torn,
And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
That wept her bleeding Love, and princely Clare,
And Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose,
The rival of her crown and of her woes,
And either Henry there,
The murder'd saint, and the majestic lord
That broke the bonds of Rome.
(Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
Their human passions now no more,
Save Charity, that glows beyond the tomb.)

ACCOMPANIED.

All that on Granta's fruitful plain
Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,
And bade these awful fanes and turrets rise,
To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come;
And thus they speak in soft accord
The liquid language of the skies:

V. QUARTETTO.

"What is grandeur, what is power?
Heavier toil, superior pain.
What the bright reward we gain?
The grateful memory of the good.
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude."

VI. RECITATIVE.

Foremost and leaning from her golden cloud
The venerable Margaret see!

"Welcome, my noble son, (she cries aloud,)
To this, thy kindred train, and me:
Pleased in thy lineaments we trace
A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.

AIR.

Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,
The flower unheeded shall descry,
And bid it round heaven's altars shed
The fragrance of its blushing head:
Shall raise from earth the latent gem
To glitter on the diadem.

VII. RECITATIVE.

"Lo! Granta waits to lead her blooming band,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, she
No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings;
Nor dares with courtly tongue refined
Profane thy inborn royalty of mind:
She reveres herself and thee.
With modest pride to grace thy youthful brow,
The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings,

And to thy just, thy gentle hand,
Submits the fasces of her sway,
While spirits blest above and men below
Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

VIII. GRAND CHORUS.

"Through the wild waves as they roar,
With watchful eye and dauntless mien,
Thy steady course of honour keep,
Nor fear the rocks, nor seek the shore:
The star of Brunswick smiles serene,
And gilds the horrors of the deep."

POEMATA.

HYMENEAL

ON THE MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Ignaræ nostrûm mentes, et inertia corda,
Dum curas regum, et sortem miseramur iniquam,
Quæ solio affixit, vetuitque calescere flammâ
Dulci, quæ dono divûm, gratissima serpit
Viscera per, mollesque animis lene implicat æstus;
Nec teneros sensus, Veneris nec præmia nôrunt,
Eloquiumve oculi, aut facunda silentia linguæ:

Scilicèt ignorant lacrymas, sævosque dolores,
Dura rudimenta, et violentæ exordia flammæ;

Scilicèt ignorant, quæ flumine tinxit amaro
Tela Venus, cæcique armamentaria Divi,
Irasque, insidiasque, et tacitum sub pectore vulnus;
Namque sub ingressu, primoque in limine Amoris
Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ;
Intus habent dulces Risus, et Gratia sedem,
Et roseis resupina toris, roseo ore Voluptas:
Regibus huc faciles aditus; communia spernunt
Ostia, jamque expers duris custodibus istis
Panditur accessus, penetraliaque intima Templi.

Tuque Oh! Angliacis, Princeps, spes optima regnis,
Ne tantum, ne finge metum: quid imagine captus
Hæres, et mentem pictura pascis inani?
Umbram miraris: nec longum tempus, et ipsa
Ibit in amplexus, thalamosque ornabit ovantes.
Ille tamen tabulis inhians longum haurit amorem,
Affatu fruitur tacito, auscultatque tacentem
Immemor artificis calami, risumque, ruboremque
Aspicit in fucis, pictæque in virginis ore:
Tanta Venus potuit; tantus tenet error amantes.

Nascere, magna Dies, qua sese AUGUSTA Britanno
Committat Pelago, patriamque relinquat amœnam;

Cujus in adventum jam nunc tria regna secundos
Attolli in plausus, dulcique accensa furore
Incipiunt agitare modos, et carmina dicunt:
Ipse animo sedenim juvenis comitatur euntem
Explorat ventos, atque auribus aëra captat,
Atque auras, atque astra vocat crudelia; pectus
Intentum exultat, surgitque arrecta cupido;
Incusat spes ægra fretum, solitoque videtur
Latior effundi pontus, fluctusque morantes.

Nascere, Lux major, qua sese AUGUSTA Britanno
Committat juveni totam, propriamque dicabit;
At citius (precor) Oh! cedas melioribus astris;
Nox finem pompæ, finemque imponere curis
Possit, et in thalamos furtim deducere nuptam;
Sufficiat requiemque viris, et amantibus umbras:
Adsit Hymen, et subridens cum matre Cupido
Accedant, sternantque toros, ignemque ministrent;
Ilicet haud pictæ incandescit imagine formæ
Ulterius juvenis,verumque agnoscit amorem.

Sculptile sicut ebur, faciemque arsisse venustam
Pygmaliona canunt: ante hanc suspiria ducit,
Alloquiturque amens, flammamque et vulnera narrat;

Implorata Venus jussit cum vivere signum,
Fœmineam inspirans animam; quæ gaudia surgunt,
Audiit ut primæ nascentia murmura linguæ,
Luctari in vitam, et paulatim volvere ocellos
Sedulus, aspexitque novâ splendescere flammâ;
Corripit amplexu vivam, jamque oscula jungit
Acria confestim, recipitque rapitque; prioris
Immemor ardoris, Nymphæque oblitus eburneæ.

THO. GRAY. Pet. Coll.

LUNA HABITABILIS.

Dum Nox rorantes, non incomitata per auras
Urget equos, tacitoque inducit sidera lapsu ;
Ultima, sed nulli soror inficianda sororum
Huc mihi, Musa ; tibi patet alti janua cœli,
Astra vides, nec te numeri, nec nomina fallunt.
Huc mihi, Diva veni ; dulce est per aperta serena
Vere frui liquido, compoque errare silenti ;
Vere frui dulce est ; modo tu dignata petentem
Sis comes, et mecum gelidâ spatiere sub umbrâ.
Scilicèt hos orbes, cœli hæc decora alta putandum est,
Noctis opes, nobis tantum lucere ; virûmque
Ostentari oculis, nostræ laquearia terræ,
Ingentes scenas, vastique aulæa theatri ?
Oh ! quis me pennis æthræ super ardua sistet
Mirantem, propiusque dabit convexa tueri ;
Teque adeo, undè fluens reficit lux mollior arva
Pallidiorque dies, tristes solata tenebras ?

Sic ego, subridens Dea sic ingressa vicissim :
Non pennis opus hìc, supera ut simul illa petamus :
Disce, Puer, potiùs cœlo deducere Lunam ;
Neu crede ad magicas te invitum accingier artes,
Thessalicosve modos ; ipsam descendere Phœben
Conspicies novus Endymion ; seque offeret ultrò
Vista tibi ante oculos, et notâ major imago.

Quin tete admoveas (tumuli super aggere spectas),
Compositum tubulo ; simul imum invade canalem
Sic intentâ acie, cœli simul alta patescent
Atria ; jamque, ausus Lunaria visere regna,
Ingredière solo, et caput inter nubila condes.

Ecce autem ! vitri se in vertice sistere Phœben
Cernis, et Oceanum, et crebris Freta consita terris
Panditur *ille* atram faciem caligine condens
Sublustri ; refugitque oculos, fallitque tuentem ;
Integram Solis lucem quippè haurit aperto
Fluctu avidus radiorum, et longos imbibit ignes :
Verum *his*, quæ, maculis variata nitentibus, auro
Cœrula discernunt, celso sese insula dorso
Plurima protrudit, prætentaque littora saxis ;
Liberior datur his quoniàm natura, minusque

Lumen depascunt liquidum ; sed tela diei
Detorquent, retròque docent se vertere flammas.

Hinc longos videas tractus, terrasque jacentes
Ordine candenti, et claros se attollere montes ;
Montes queîs Rhodope assurgat, quibus Ossa nivali
Vertice : tum scopulis infrà pendentibus antra
Nigrescunt clivorum umbrâ, nemorumque tenebris.
Non rores illi, aut desunt sua nubila mundo ;
Non frigus gelidum, atque herbis gratissimus imber ;
His quoque nota ardet picto Thaumantias arcu,
Os roseum Auroræ, propriique crepuscula cœli.

Et dubitas tantum certis cultoribus orbem
Destitui ? exercent agros, sua mœnia condunt
Hi quoque, vel Martem invadunt, curantque triumphos
Victores : sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi ;
His metus, atque amor, et mentem mortalia tangunt.
Quin, uti nos oculis jam nunc juvat ire per arva,
Lucentesque plagas Lunæ, pontumque profundum ;
Idem illos etiàm ardor agit, cum se aureus effert
Sub sudum globus, et terrarum ingentior orbis ;
Scilicèt omne æquor tum lustrant, scilicèt omnem
Tellurem, gentesque polo sub utroque jacentes ;

Et quidam æstivi indefessus ad ætheris ignes
Pervigilat, noctem exercens, cœlumque fatigat;
Jam Galli apparent, jam se Germania latè
Tollit, et albescens pater Apenninus ad auras;
Jam tandem in Borean, en! parvulus Anglia nævus
(Quanquam aliis longè fulgentior) extulit oras;
Formosum extemplò lumen, maculamque nitentem
Invisunt crebri Proceres, serùmque tuendo;
Hærent, certatimque suo cognomine signant:
Forsitan et Lunæ longinquus in orbe Tyrannus
Se dominum vocat, et nostrâ se jactat in aulâ.
Terras possim alias propiori sole calentes
Narrare, atque alias, jubaris queîs parcior usus,
Lunarum chorus, et tenuis penuria Phœbi;
Nî, meditans eadem hæc audaci evolvere cantu,
Jam pulset citharam soror, et præludia tentet.

Non tamen has proprias laudes, nec facta silebo
Jampridèm in fatis, patriæque oracula famæ.
Tempus erit, sursùm totos contendere cœtus
Quo cernes longo excursu, primosque colonos
Migrare in lunam, et notos mutare Penates:
Dum stupet obtutu tacito vetus incola, longèque
Insolitas explorat aves, classemque volantem.

Ut quondàm ignotum marmor, camposque natantes
Tranavit Zephyros visens, nova regna, Columbus;
Litora mirantur circùm, mirantur et undæ
Inclusas acies ferro, turmasque biformes,
Monstraque fœta armis, et non imitabile fulmen.
Fœdera mox icta, et gemini commercia mundi,
Agminaque assueto glomerata sub æthere cerno.
Anglia, quæ pelagi jamdudum torquet habenas,
Exercetque frequens ventos, atque imperat undæ;
Aëris attollet fasces, veteresque triumphos
Hùc etiam ferret, et victis dominabitur auris.

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FATAL SISTERS.

AN ODE. FROM THE NORSE TONGUE

Now the storm begins to lower,
(Haste, the loom of hell prepare,)
Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glittering lances are the loom,
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

See the griesly texture grow!
('Tis of human entrails made,)
And the weights, that play below,
Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,
Shoot the trembling chords along.
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong.

Mista, black terrific maid,
Sangrida, and Hilda, see,
Join the wayward work to aid:
'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of fate we tread,
Wading through the ensanguined field,
Gondula, and Geira, spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill, and ours to spare:
Spite of danger he shall live.
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

They, whom once the desert-beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound:
Fate demands a nobler head;
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep:
Strains of immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun.
Sisters, weave the web of death;
Sisters, cease; the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands!
Songs of joy and triumph sing!
Joy to the victorious bands;
Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,
Learn the tenor of our song.
Scotland, through each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed:
Each her thundering falchion wield:
Each bestride her sable steed.
Hurry, hurry to the field!

THE VEGTAM'S KIVITHA;

OR, THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

AN ODE. FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

UPROSE the king of men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed;
Down the yawning steep he rode,
That leads to Hela's drear abode.
Him the dog of darkness spied;
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,
(While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,
Foam and human gore distill'd:)
Hoarse he bays with hideous din,
Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin;
And long pursues with fruitless yell,
The father of the powerful spell.

Onward still his way he takes,
(The groaning earth beneath him shakes,)
Till full before his fearless eyes
The portals nine of hell arise.

Right against the eastern gate,
By the moss-grown pile he sate;
Where long of yore to sleep was laid
The dust of the prophetic maid.
Facing to the northern clime,
Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme;
Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,
The thrilling verse that wakes the dead:
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breathed a sullen sound.

PROPHETESS.

What call unknown, what charms presume
To break the quiet of the tomb?
Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
And drags me from the realms of night?
Long on these mouldering bones have beat
The winter's snow, the summer's heat,

The drenching dews, and driving rain!
Let me, let me sleep again.
Who is he, with voice unblest,
That calls me from the bed of rest?

ODIN.

A traveller, to thee unknown,
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
Thou the deeds of light shalt know;
Tell me what is done below,
For whom yon glittering board is spread,
Dress'd for whom yon golden bed?

PROPHETESS.

Mantling in the goblet see
The pure beverage of the bee:
O'er it hangs the shield of gold;
'Tis the drink of Balder bold:
Balder's head to death is given.
Pain can reach the sons of heaven!
Unwilling I my lips unclose:
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Once again my call obey,
Prophetess, arise, and say,
What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate?

PROPHETESS.

In Hoder's hand the hero's doom;
His brother sends him to the tomb.
Now my weary lips I close:
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Prophetess, my spell obey,
Once again arise, and say,
Who the avenger of his guilt,
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt?

PROPHETESS.

In the caverns of the west,
By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,

A wondrous boy shall Rinda bear,
Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair,
Nor wash his visage in the stream,
Nor see the sun's departing beam,
Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile,
Flaming on the funeral pile.
Now my weary lips I close:
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Yet a while my call obey:
Prophetess, awake, and say,
What virgins these, in speechless woe,
That bend to earth their solemn brow,
That their flaxen tresses tear,
And snowy veils that float in air?
Tell me whence their sorrows rose:
Then I leave thee to repose.

PROPHETESS.

Ha! no traveller art thou,
King of men, I know thee now;

Mightiest of a mighty line——

ODIN.

No boding maid of skill divine
Art thou, nor prophetess of good;
But mother of the giant brood!

PROPHETESS.

Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
That never shall inquirer come
To break my iron-sleep again;
Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain;
Never, till substantial night
Has reassumed her ancient right;
Till wrapt in flames, in ruin hurl'd,
Sinks the fabric of the world.

THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

A FRAGMENT. FROM THE WELSH.

Owen's praise demands my song,
Owen swift, and Owen strong;
Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,
Gwyneth's shield, and Britain's gem.
He nor heaps his brooded stores,
Nor on all profusely pours;
Lord of every regal art,
Liberal hand, and open heart.

Big with hosts of mighty name,
Squadrons three against him came;
This the force of Eirin hiding,
Side by side as proudly riding,
On her shadow long and gay
Lochlin plows the watery way;

There the Norman sails afar
Catch the winds and join the war:
Black and huge along they sweep,
Burdens of the angry deep.

Dauntless on his native sands
The dragon-son of Mona stands;
In glittering arms and glory drest,
High he rears his ruby crest.
There the thundering strokes begin,
There the press, and there the din;
Talymalfra's rocky shore
Echoing to the battle's roar.
Check'd by the torrent-tide of blood,
Backward Meinai rolls his flood;
While, heap'd his master's feet around,
Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground.
Where his glowing eyeballs turn,
Thousand banners round him burn:
Where he points his purple spear,
Hasty, hasty rout is there,
Marking with indignant eye
Fear to stop, and shame to fly.

There confusion, terror's child,
Conflict fierce, and ruin wild,
Agony, that pants for breath,
Despair and honourable death.

* * * * *

THE DEATH OF HOEL.

AN ODE. SELECTED FROM THE GODODIN.

Had I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage and wild affright
Upon Deïra's squadrons hurl'd
To rush, and sweep them from the world!

Too, too secure in youthful pride,
By them, my friend, my Hoel, died,
Great Cian's son: of Madoc old
He ask'd no heaps of hoarded gold;
Alone in nature's wealth array'd,
He ask'd and had the lovely maid.

To Cattraeth's vale in glittering row
Thrice two hundred warriors go:

Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honour deck,
Wreath'd in many a golden link:
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn:
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,
Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong,
(Bursting through the bloody throng)
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall.

Have ye seen the tusky boar,
Or the bull, with sullen roar,
On surrounding foes advance?
So Caràdoc bore his lance.

Conan's name, my lay, rehearse,
Build to him the lofty verse,
Sacred tribute of the bard,
Verse, the hero's sole reward.

As the flame's devouring force;
As the whirlwind in its course;
As the thunder's fiery stroke,
Glancing on the shiver'd oak;
Did the sword of Conan mow
The crimson harvest of the foe.

POSTHUMOUS POEMS.

AGRIPPINA, A TRAGEDY.

A FRAGMENT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGRIPPINA, the Empress-mother.
NERO, the Emperor.
POPPÆA, believed to be in love with OTHO.
OTHO, a young man of quality, in love with POPPÆA.
SENECA, the Emperor's Preceptor.
ANICETUS, Captain of the Guards.
DEMETRIUS, the Cynic, friend to SENECA.
ACERONIA, Confidant to AGRIPPINA.

ACT I. SCENE I.—AGRIPPINA. ACERONIA.

SCENE.—*The Emperor's villa at Baiæ.*

AGRIP. 'Tis well, begone! your errand is perform'd, [*Speaks as to* Anicetus *entering.*
The message needs no comment. Tell your master,
His mother shall obey him. Say you saw her
Yielding due reverence to his high command:
Alone, unguarded, and without a lictor,
As fits the daughter of Germanicus.
Say, she retired to Antium; there to tend
Her household cares, a woman's best employment.
What if you add how she turn'd pale and trembled;
You think, you spied a tear stand in her eye,

And would have dropp'd, but that her pride restrain'd it?
(Go! you can paint it well) 'twill profit you,
And please the stripling. Yet 'twould dash his joy
To hear the spirit of Britannicus
Yet walks on earth: at least there are who know
Without a spell to raise, and bid it fire
A thousand haughty hearts, unused to shake
When a boy frowns, nor to be lured with smiles
To taste of hollow kindness, or partake
His hospitable board: they are aware
Of the unpledged bowl, they love not aconite.

ACER. He's gone: and much I hope these walls alone
And the mute air are privy to your passion.
Forgive your servant's fears, who sees the danger
Which fierce resentment cannot fail to raise
In haughty youth, and irritated power.

AGRIP. And dost thou talk to me, to me of danger,
Of haughty youth and irritated power,
To her that gave it being, her that arm'd
This painted Jove, and taught his novice hand
To aim the forked bolt; while he stood trembling,
Scared at the sound, and dazzled with its brightness?
'Tis like, thou hast forgot, when yet a stranger

To adoration, to the grateful steam
Of flattery's incense, and obsequious vows
From voluntary realms, a puny boy,
Deck'd with no other lustre than the blood
Of Agrippina's race, he lived unknown
To fame, or fortune; haply eyed at distance
Some edileship, ambitious of the power
To judge of weights and measures; scarcely dared
On expectation's strongest wing to soar
High as the consulate, that empty shade
Of long-forgotten liberty: when I
Oped his young eye to bear the blaze of greatness;
Show'd him where empire tower'd, and bade him strike
The noble quarry. Gods! then was the time
To shrink from danger; fear might then have worn
The mask of prudence; but a heart like mine,
A heart that glows with the pure Julian fire,
If bright ambition from her craggy seat
Display the radiant prize, will mount undaunted,
Gain the rough heights, and grasp the dangerous honour.

ACER. Through various life I have pursued your steps,
Have seen your soul, and wonder'd at its daring:

Hence rise my fears. Nor am I yet to learn
How vast the debt of gratitude which Nero
To such a mother owes; the world, you gave him,
Suffices not to pay the obligation.
I well remember too, (for I was present,)
When in a secret and dead hour of night,
Due sacrifice perform'd with barbarous rites
Of mutter'd charms, and solemn invocation,
You bade the Magi call the dreadful powers
That read futurity, to know the fate
Impending o'er your son: their answer was,
If the son reign, the mother perishes.
Perish (you cried) the mother! reign the son!
He reigns, the rest is heaven's; who oft has bade,
Even when its will seem'd wrote in lines of blood,
The unthought event disclose a whiter meaning.
Think too how oft in weak and sickly minds
The sweets of kindness lavishly indulged
Rankle to gall; and benefits too great
To be repaid, sit heavy on the soul,
As unrequited wrongs. The willing homage
Of prostrate Rome, the senate's joint applause,
The riches of the earth, the train of pleasures
That wait on youth, and arbitrary sway:

These were your gift, and with them you bestow'd
The very power he has to be ungrateful.

AGRIP. Thus ever grave and undisturb'd reflection
Pours its cool dictates in the madding ear
Of rage, and thinks to quench the fire it feels not.
Say'st thou I must be cautious, must be silent,
And tremble at the phantom I have raised?
Carry to him thy timid counsels. He
Perchance may heed them: tell him too, that one
Who had such liberal power to give, may still
With equal power resume that gift, and raise
A tempest that shall shake her own creation
To its original atoms—tell me! say,
This mighty emperor, this dreaded hero,
Has he beheld the glittering front of war?
Knows his soft ear the trumpet's thrilling voice,
And outcry of the battle? Have his limbs
Sweat under iron harness? Is he not
The silken son of dalliance, nursed in ease
And pleasure's flowery lap?—Rubellius lives,
And Sylla has his friends, though school'd by fear
To bow the supple knee, and court the times
With shows of fair obeisance; and a call,
Like mine, might serve belike to wake pretensions

Drowsier than theirs, who boast the genuine blood
Of our imperial house.

ACER. Did I not wish to check this dangerous passion,
I might remind my mistress that her nod
Can rouse eight hardy legions, wont to stem
With stubborn nerves the tide, and face the rigour
Of bleak Germania's snows. Four, not less brave,
That in Armenia quell the Parthian force
Under the warlike Corbulo, by you
Mark'd for their leader: these, by ties confirm'd,
Of old respect and gratitude, are yours.
Surely the Masians too, and those of Egypt,
Have not forgot your sire: the eye of Rome
And the Prætorian camp have long revered,
With custom'd awe, the daughter, sister, wife,
And mother of their Cæsars.

AGRIP. Ha! by Juno,
It bears a noble semblance. On this base
My great revenge shall rise; or say we sound
The trump of liberty; there will not want,
Even in the servile senate, ears to own
Her spirit-stirring voice; Soranus there,
And Cassius; Vetus too, and Thrasea.

Minds of the antique cast, rough, stubborn souls,
That struggle with the yoke. How shall the spark
Unquenchable, that glows within their breasts,
Blaze into freedom, when the idle herd
(Slaves from the womb, created but to stare,
And bellow in the Circus) yet will start,
And shake them at the name of liberty,
Stung by a senseless word, a vain tradition,
As there were magic in it? Wrinkled beldams
Teach it their grandchildren, as somewhat rare
That anciently appear'd, but when, extends
Beyond their chronicle—oh! 'tis a cause
To arm the hand of childhood, and rebrace
The slacken'd sinews of time-wearied age.

Yes, we may meet, ungrateful boy, we may!
Again the buried Genius of old Rome
Shall from the dust uprear his reverend head,
Roused by the shout of millions: there before
His high tribunal thou and I appear.
Let majesty sit on thy awful brow,
And lighten from thy eye: around thee call
The gilded swarm that wantons in the sunshine
Of thy full favour; Seneca be there
In gorgeous phrase of labour'd eloquence

To dress thy plea, and Burrhus strengthen it
With his plain soldier's oath and honest seeming.
Against thee, liberty and Agrippina:
The world, the prize; and fair befall the victors.
But soft! why do I waste the fruitless hours
In threats unexecuted? Haste thee, fly
These hated walls that seem to mock my shame,
And cast me forth in duty to their lord.

ACER. 'Tis time to go, the sun is high advanced,
And, ere mid-day, Nero will come to Baiæ.

AGRIP. My thought aches at him; not the basilisk
More deadly to the sight, than is to me
The cool injurious eye of frozen kindness.
I will not meet its poison. Let him feel
Before he sees me.

ACER. Why then stays my sovereign,
Where he so soon may—

AGRIP. Yes, I will be gone,
But not to Antium—all shall be confess'd,
Whate'er the frivolous tongue of giddy fame
Has spread among the crowd; things, that but whisper'd
Have arch'd the hearer's brow, and riveted
His eyes in fearful ecstasy: no matter

What; so't be strange, and dreadful.—Sorceries,
Assassinations, poisonings—the deeper
My guilt, the blacker his ingratitude.
And you, ye manes of ambition's victims,
Enshrined Claudius, with the pitied ghosts
Of the Syllani, doom'd to early death,
(Ye unavailing horrors, fruitless crimes!)
If from the realms of night my voice ye hear,
In lieu of penitence, and vain remorse,
Accept my vengeance. Though by me ye bled,
He was the cause. My love, my fears for him,
Dried the soft springs of pity in my heart,
And froze them up with deadly cruelty.
Yet if your injured shades demand my fate,
If murder cries for murder, blood for blood,
Let me not fall alone; but crush his pride,
And sink the traitor in his mother's ruin.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. OTHO, POPPÆA.

OTHO. Thus far we're safe. Thanks to the rosy queen
Of amorous thefts: and had her wanton son
Lent us his wings, we could not have beguiled

With more elusive speed the dazzled sight
Of wakeful jealousy. Be gay securely;
Dispel, my fair, with smiles, the timorous cloud
That hangs on thy clear brow. So Helen look'd,
So her white neck reclined, so was she borne
By the young Trojan to his gilded bark
With fond reluctance, yielding modesty,
And oft reverted eye, as if she knew not
Whether she fear'd, or wish'd to be pursued.

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[TO IGNORANCE.]

A FRAGMENT.

HAIL, horrors, hail! ye ever gloomy bowers,
Ye gothic fanes, and antiquated towers,
Where rushy Camus' slowly-winding flood
Perpetual draws his humid train of mud:
Glad I revisit thy neglected reign,
Oh take me to thy peaceful shade again.
But chiefly thee, whose influence breathed from high
Augments the native darkness of the sky;
Ah, ignorance! soft salutary power!
Prostrate with filial reverence I adore.
Thrice hath Hyperion roll'd his annual race,
Since weeping I forsook thy fond embrace.

Oh say, successful dost thou still oppose
Thy leaden ægis 'gainst our ancient foes?
Still stretch, tenacious of thy right divine,
The massy sceptre o'er thy slumbering line?
And dews Lethean through the land dispense
To steep in slumbers each benighted sense?
If any spark of wit's delusive ray
Break out, and flash a momentary day,
With damp, cold touch forbid it to aspire,
And huddle up in fogs the dangerous fire.

Oh say—she hears me not, but, careless grown,
Lethargic nods upon her ebon throne.
Goddess! awake, arise! alas, my fears!
Can powers immortal feel the force of years?
Not thus of old, with ensigns wide unfurl'd,
She rode triumphant o'er the vanquish'd world;
Fierce nations own'd her unresisted might,
And all was ignorance, and all was night.

Oh! sacred age! Oh! times for ever lost!
(The schoolman's glory and the churchman's boast.)
For ever gone—yet still to fancy new,

Her rapid wings the transient scene pursue,
And bring the buried ages back to view.

High on her car, behold the grandam ride
Like old Sesostris with barbaric pride;
* * * a team of harness'd monarchs bend

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THE ALLIANCE OF

EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT.

A FRAGMENT.

ESSAY I.

——— Πόταγ', ὦ 'γαθέ· τὰν γὰρ ἀοιδὰν
Οὔτι πα εἰς Ἀΐδαν γε τὸν ἐκλελάθοντα φυλαξεῖς.
Theocritus, Id. I. 63.

As sickly plants betray a niggard earth,
Whose barren bosom starves her generous birth,
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains,
Their roots to feed, and fill their verdant veins:
And as in climes, where winter holds his reign,
The soil, though fertile, will not teem in vain,
Forbids her gems to swell, her shades to rise,
Nor trusts her blossoms to the churlish skies:
So draw mankind in vain the vital airs,
Unform'd, unfriended, by those kindly cares,

That health and vigour to the soul impart,
Spread the young thought, and warm the opening heart:
So fond instruction on the growing powers
Of nature idly lavishes her stores,
If equal justice with unclouded face
Smile not indulgent on the rising race,
And scatter, with a free though frugal hand,
Light golden showers of plenty o'er the land:
But tyranny has fix'd her empire there,
To check their tender hopes with chilling fear,
And blast the blooming promise of the year.

This spacious animated scene survey,
From where the rolling orb, that gives the day,
His sable sons with nearer course surrounds
To either pole, and life's remotest bounds,
How rude soe'er the exterior form we find,
Howe'er opinion tinge the varied mind,
Alike to all, the kind, impartial heaven
The sparks of truth and happiness has given:
With sense to feel, with memory to retain,
They follow pleasure, and they fly from pain;
Their judgment mends the plan their fancy draws,
The event presages, and explores the cause;

The soft returns of gratitude they know,
By fraud elude, by force repel the foe;
While mutual wishes, mutual woes endear
The social smile, the sympathetic tear.

Say, then, through ages by what fate confined
To different climes seem different souls assign'd?
Here measured laws and philosophic ease
Fix, and improve the polish'd arts of peace;
There industry and gain their vigils keep,
Command the winds, and tame the unwilling deep:
Here force and hardy deeds of blood prevail;
There languid pleasure sighs in every gale.
Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar
Has Scythia breathed the living cloud of war;
And, where the deluge burst, with sweepy sway
Their arms, their kings, their gods were roll'd away.
As oft have issued, host impelling host,
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields
Her boasted titles, and her golden fields:
With grim delight the brood of winter view
A brighter day, and heavens of azure hue;

Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows.
Proud of the yoke, and pliant to the rod,
Why yet does Asia dread a monarch's nod,
While European freedom still withstands
The encroaching tide that drowns her lessening lands;
And sees far off, with an indignant groan,
Her native plains, and empires once her own?
Can opener skies and sons of fiercer flame
O'erpower the fire that animates our frame;
As lamps, that shed at eve a cheerful ray,
Fade and expire beneath the eye of day?
Need we the influence of the northern star
To string our nerves and steel our hearts to war?
And, where the face of nature laughs around,
Must sickening virtue fly the tainted ground?
Unmanly thought! what seasons can control,
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
Who, conscious of the source from whence she springs,
By reason's light, on resolution's wings,
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
O'er Libya's deserts and through Zembla's snows?
She bids each slumbering energy awake,
Another touch, another temper take,

Suspends the inferior laws that rule our clay:
The stubborn elements confess her sway;
Their little wants, their low desires, refine,
And raise the mortal to a height divine.

Not but the human fabric from the birth
Imbibes a flavour of its parent earth:
As various tracts enforce a various toil,
The manners speak the idiom of their soil.
An iron-race the mountain cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain:
For where unwearied sinews must be found
With sidelong plough to quell the flinty ground,
To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood,
To brave the savage rushing from the wood,
What wonder if to patient valour train'd,
They guard with spirit what by strength they gain'd?
And while their rocky ramparts round they see,
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow,)
Insult the plenty of the vales below?
What wonder, in the sultry climes, that spread
Where Nile redundant o'er his summer-bed

From his broad bosom life and verdure flings,
And broods o'er Egypt with his watery wings,
If with adventurous oar and ready sail
The dusky people drive before the gale;
Or on frail floats to neighbouring cities ride,
That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide

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[The following couplet, which was intended to have been introduced in the poem on the Alliance of Education and Government, is much too beautiful to be lost.—*Mason.*]

When love could teach a monarch to be wise,
And gospel-light first dawn'd from Bullen's eyes.

STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

In silent gaze the tuneful choir among,
  Half pleased, half blushing, let the Muse admire,
While Bentley leads her sister-art along,
  And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.

See, in their course, each transitory thought
  Fix'd by his touch a lasting essence take;
Each dream, in fancy's airy colouring wrought,
  To local symmetry and life awake!

The tardy rhymes that used to linger on,
  To censure cold, and negligent of fame,
In swifter measures animated run,
  And catch a lustre from his genuine flame.

Ah! could they catch his strength, his easy grace,
His quick creation, his unerring line;
The energy of Pope they might efface,
And Dryden's harmony submit to mine.

But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration given,
That burns in Shakspeare's or in Milton's page,
The pomp and prodigality of heaven.

As when conspiring in the diamond's blaze,
The meaner gems that singly charm the sight,
Together dart their intermingled rays,
And dazzle with a luxury of light.

Enough for me, if to some feeling breast
My lines a secret sympathy . . . . .
And as their pleasing influenc . . . . . .
A sigh of soft reflection . . . . . .

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[ODE TO VICISSITUDE.]

Now the golden morn aloft
  Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
  She wooes the tardy spring:
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground;
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
  Frisking ply their feeble feet;
Forgetful of their wintry trance,
  The birds his presence greet:
But chief, the sky-lark warbles high
His trembling thrilling ecstasy;

And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my soul! on wings of fire,
Rise the rapturous choir among;
Hark! 'tis nature strikes the lyre,
And leads the general song:

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;
Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by:
Their raptures now that wildly flow,
No yesterday nor morrow know;
'Tis man alone that joy descries
With forward and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past misfortune's brow
Soft reflection's hand can trace;
And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw
A melancholy grace;
While hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower

And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy pleasure leads,
See a kindred grief pursue;
Behind the steps that misery treads,
Approaching comfort view:
The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
Chastised by sabler tints of woe;
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise.

Humble quiet builds her cell,
Near the source whence pleasure flows;

She eyes the clear crystalline well,
And tastes it as it goes.
. . . . far below the . . . . . crowd
. . . . . .
Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,
. . . . perish in the boundless deeps.

Mark where indolence and pride,
. . . . . .
. . . softly rolling, side by side,
Their dull but daily round :

* * * * * *

LINES.

With beauty, with pleasure surrounded, to languish —
To weep without knowing the cause of my anguish:
To start from short slumbers, and wish for the morning—
To close my dull eyes when I see it returning;
Sighs sudden and frequent, looks ever dejected—
Words that steal from my tongue, by no meaning connected!
Ah! say, fellow-swains, how these symptoms befell me?
They smile, but reply not—sure Delia will tell me!

SONG.

THYRSIS, when we parted, swore
  Ere the spring he would return—
Ah! what means yon violet flower!
  And the bud that decks the thorn!
'Twas the lark that upward sprung!
'Twas the nightingale that sung!

Idle notes! untimely green!
  Why this unavailing haste?
Western gales and skies serene
  Speak not always winter past.
Cease, my doubts, my fears to move,
Spare the honour of my love.

TOPHET.

THUS Tophet look'd; so grinn'd the brawling fiend,
Whilst frighted prelates bow'd and call'd him friend.
Our mother-church, with half-averted sight,
Blush'd as she bless'd her griesly proselyte;
Hosannas rung through hell's tremendous borders,
And Satan's self had thoughts of taking orders.

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SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER.

WRITTEN IN 1761, AND FOUND IN ONE OF HIS POCKET-BOOKS.

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune;
He had not the method of making a fortune;
Could love, and could hate, so was thought somewhat odd;
No very great wit, he believed in a God:
A post or a pension he did not desire,
But left church and state to Charles Townshend and Squire.

THE CANDIDATE;

OR, THE CAMBRIDGE COURTSHIP.

When sly Jemmy Twitcher had smugg'd up his face,
With a lick of court white-wash, and pious grimace,
A wooing he went, where three sisters of old
In harmless society guttle and scold.

"Lord! sister," says Physic to Law, "I declare,
Such a sheep-biting look, such a pick-pocket air!
Not I for the Indies:—You know I'm no prude,—
But his nose is a shame,—and his eyes are so lewd!
Then he shambles and straddles so oddly—I fear—
No—at our time of life 'twould be silly, my dear."

"I don't know," says Law, "but methinks for his look,
'Tis just like the picture in Rochester's book;

Then his character, Phyzzy,—his morals—his life—
When she died, I can't tell, but he once had a wife.
They say he's no Christian, loves drinking and w——g,
And all the town rings of his swearing and roaring!
His lying and filching, and Newgate-bird tricks;—
Not I—for a coronet, chariot and six."

Divinity heard, between waking and dozing,
Her sisters denying, and Jemmy proposing:
From table she rose, and with bumper in hand,
She stroked up her belly, and stroked down her band—
"What a pother is here about wenching and roaring!
Why, David loved catches, and Solomon w——g:
Did not Israel filch from the Egyptians of old
Their jewels of silver and jewels of gold?
The prophet of Bethel, we read, told a lie:
He drinks—so did Noah;—he swears—so do I:
To reject him for such peccadillos, were odd;
Besides, he repents—for he talks about G**—

[*To* Jemmy.]

"Never hang down your head, you poor penitent elf,
Come buss me—I'll be Mrs. Twitcher myself."

* * * * * *

IMPROMPTU,

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW, IN 1766, OF THE SEAT AND RUINS OF A DECEASED NOBLEMAN, AT KINGSGATE, KENT.

OLD, and abandon'd by each venal friend,
Here H——d form'd the pious resolution
To smuggle a few years, and strive to mend
A broken character and constitution.

On this congenial spot he fix'd his choice;
Earl Goodwin trembled for his neighbouring sand;
Here sea-gulls scream, and cormorants rejoice,
And mariners, though shipwreck'd, dread to land.

Here reign the blustering North and blighting East,
No tree is heard to whisper, bird to sing;
Yet Nature could not furnish out the feast,
Art he invokes new horrors still to bring.

Here mouldering fanes and battlements arise,
Turrets and arches nodding to their fall,
Unpeopled monasteries delude our eyes,
And mimic desolation covers all.

"Ah!" said the sighing peer, "had B—te been true,
Nor M—'s, R—'s, B—'s friendship vain,
Far better scenes than these had blest our view,
And realized the beauties which we feign:

"Purged by the sword, and purified by fire,
Then had we seen proud London's hated walls;
Owls would have hooted in St. Peter's choir,
And foxes stunk and litter'd in St. Paul's."

IMPROMPTU,

WHILE WALKING WITH MR. NICHOLLS IN THE SPRING IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF CAMBRIDGE.

THERE pipes the woodlark, and the song-thrush there
Scatters his loose notes in the waste of air.

PART OF AN EPITAPH ON THE WIFE OF MASON.

Tell them, though 'tis an awful thing to die,
'Twas e'en to thee; yet the dread path once trod,
Heaven lifts its everlasting portals high,
And bids the pure in heart behold their God.

EXTEMPORE EPITAPH ON ANNE, COUNTESS OF DORSET.

Now clean, now hideous, mellow now, now gruff,
She swept, she hiss'd, she ripen'd, and grew rough,
At Brougham, Pendragon, Appleby, and Brough.

THE CHARACTERS OF THE CHRIST-CROSS ROW.

BY A CRITIC, TO MRS. ——.

* * * * * *

GREAT D draws near—the dutchess sure is come,
Open the doors of the withdrawing-room;
Her daughters deck'd most daintily I see,
The dowager grows a perfect double D.
E enters next, and with her Eve appears,
Not like yon dowager deprest with years;
What ease and elegance her person grace,
Bright beaming, as the evening-star, her face;
Queen Esther next—how fair e'en after death,
Then one faint glimpse of Queen Elizabeth;
No more, our Esthers now are naught but Hetties,
Elizabeths all dwindled into Betties;

In vain you think to find them under E,
They're all diverted into H and B.
F follows fast the fair—and in his rear,
See folly, fashion, foppery, straight appear,
All with fantastic clews, fantastic clothes,
With fans and flounces, fringe and furbelows.
Here Grub-street geese presume to joke and jeer,
All, all, but Grannam Osborne's Gazetteer.
High heaves his hugeness H; methinks we see
Henry the Eighth's most monstrous majesty;
But why on such *mock* grandeur should we dwell?
H mounts to heaven, and H descends to hell.

* * * *

As H the Hebrew found, so I the Jew,
See Isaac, Joseph, Jacob, pass in view;
The walls of old Jerusalem appear,
See Israel, and all Judah thronging there.

* * * * *

P pokes his head out, yet has not a pain;
Like Punch, he peeps, but soon pops in again;
Pleased with his pranks, the Pisgys call him Puck,
Mortals he loves to prick, and pinch, and pluck;
Now a pert prig, he perks upon your face,
Now peers, pores, ponders, with profound grimace,

Now a proud prince, in pompous purple drest,
And now a player, a peer, a pimp, or priest;
A pea, a pin, in a perpetual round,
Now seems a penny, and now shows a pound;
Like perch or pike, in pond you see him come,
He in plantations hangs like pear or plum,
Pippin or peach; then perches on the spray,
In form of parrot, pye, or popinjay.
P, Proteus-like, all tricks, all shapes can show,
The pleasantest person in the Christ-Cross row.

* * * * *

As K a king, Q represents a queen,
And seems small difference the sounds between;
K, as a man, with hoarser accent speaks,
In shriller notes Q like a female squeaks;
Behold K struts, as might a king become,
Q draws her train along the drawing-room,
Slow follow all the quality of state,
Queer Queensbury only does refuse to wait.

* * * * *

Thus great R reigns in town, while different far,
Rests in retirement, *little* rural R;
Remote from cities lives in lone retreat,
With rooks and rabbit burrows round his seat—

S sails the swan slow down the silver stream.

* * * *

So big with weddings, waddles W,
And brings all womankind before your view;
A wench, a wife, a widow, and a w—e,
With woe behind, and wantonness before.

POEMATA.

SAPPHIC ODE: TO MR. WEST.

Barbaras ædes aditure mecum
Quas Eris semper fovet inquieta,
Lis ubi latè sonat, et togatum
Æstuat agmen;

Dulcius quanto, patulis sub ulmi
Hospitæ ramis temerè jacentem
Sic libris horas, tenuique inertes
Fallere Musâ?

Sæpe enim curis vagor expeditâ
Mente; dum, blandam meditans Camænam,
Vix malo rori, meminive seræ
Cedere nocti;

Et, pedes quò me rapiunt, in omni
Colle Parnassum videor videre
Fertilem sylvæ, gelidamque in omni
Fonte Aganippen.

Risit et Ver me, facilesque Nymphæ
Nare captantem, nec ineleganti,
Manè quicquid de violis eundo
Surripit aura:

Me reclinatum teneram per herbam;
Quà leves cursus aqua cunque ducit,
Et moras dulci strepitu lapillo
Nectit in omni.

Hæ novo nostrum ferè pectus anno
Simplices curæ tenuere, cœlum
Quamdiù sudum explicuit Favonî
Purior hora:

Otia et campos nec adhuc relinquo,
Nec magis Phœbo Clytie fidelis;
(Ingruant venti licet, et senescat
Mollior æstas.)

Namque, seu, lætos hominum labores
Prataque et montes recreante curru,
Purpurâ tractus oriens Eoos
Vestit, et auro ;

Sedulus servo veneratus orbem
Prodigum splendoris ; amœniori
Sive dilectam meditatur igne
Pingere Calpen ;

Usque dum, fulgore magìs magìs jam
Languido circum, variata nubes
Labitur furtim, viridisque in umbras
Scena recessit.

O ego felix, vice si (nec unquam
Surgerem rursus) simili cadentem
Parca me lenis sineret quieto
Fallere Letho !

Multa flagranti radiisque cincto
Integris ah ! quam nihil inviderem,
Cum Dei ardentes medius quadrigas
Sentit Olympus.

ALCAIC FRAGMENT.

O LACRYMARUM fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium orus ex animo; quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.

LATIN LINES

ADDRESSED TO MR. WEST, FROM GENOA.

HORRIDOS tractus, Boreæque linquens
Regna Taurini fera, molliorem
Advehor brumam, Genuæque amantes
Litora soles.

ELEGIAC VERSES,

OCCASIONED BY THE SIGHT OF THE PLAINS WHERE THE BATTLE OF TREBIA WAS FOUGHT.

Qua Trebie glaucas salices intersecat undâ,
Arvaque Romanis nobilitata malis.
Visus adhuc amnis veteri de clade rubere,
Et suspirantes ducere mœstus aquas;
Maurorumque ala, et nigræ increbescere turmæ,
Et pulsa Ausonidum ripa sonare fugâ.

CARMEN AD C. FAVONIUM ZEPHYRINUM.

Mater rosarum, cui teneræ vigent
Auræ Favonî, cui Venus it comes
Lasciva, Nympharum choreis
Et volucrum celebrata cantu!
Dic, non inertem fallere quâ diem
Amat sub umbrâ, seu sinit aureum
Dormire plectrum, seu retentat
Pierio Zephyrinus antro
Furore dulci plenus, et immemor
Reptantis inter frigora Tusculi
Umbrosa, vel colles Amici
Palladiæ superantis Albæ.
Dilecta Fauno, et capripedum choris
Pineta, testor vos, Anio minax
Quæcunque per clivos volutus
Præcipiti tremefecit amne,

Illius altum Tibur, et Æsulæ
Audîsse sylvas nomen amabiles,
Illius et gratas Latinis
Naisin ingeminâsse rupes;
Nam me Latinæ Naides uvidâ
Vidêre ripâ, quâ niveas levi
Tam sæpe lavit rore plumas
Dulcè canens Venusinus ales;
Mirum! canenti conticuit nemus,
Sacrique fontes, et retinent adhuc
(Sic Musa jussit) saxa molles
Docta modos, veteresque lauri.
Mirare nec tu me citharæ rudem
Claudis laborantem numeris: loca
Amœna, jucundumque ver in-
compositum docuere carmen;
Hærent sub omni nam folio nigri
Phœbea lucî (credite) somnia,
Argutiusque et lympha et auræ
Nescio quid solito loquuntur.

FRAGMENT OF A

LATIN POEM ON THE GAURUS.

Nec procul infelix se tollit in æthera Gaurus,
Prospiciens vitreum lugenti vertice pontum:
Tristior ille diu, et veteri desuetus olivâ
Gaurus, pampineæque eheu jam nescius umbræ;
Horrendi tam sæva premit vicinia montis,
Attonitumque urget latus, exuritque ferentem.

Nam fama est olim, mediâ dum rura silebant
Nocte, Deo victa, et molli perfusa quiete,
Infremuisse æquor ponti, auditamque per omnes
Latè tellurem surdùm immugire cavernas:
Quo sonitu nemora alta tremunt: tremit excita tuto
Parthenopæa sinu, flammantisque ora Vesevi.
At subitò se aperire solum, vastosque recessus

Pandere sub pedibus, nigrâque voragine fauces;
Tum piceas cinerum glomerare sub æthere nubes
Vorticibus rapidis, ardentique imbre procellam.
Præcipites fugere feræ, perque avia longè
Sylvarum fugit pastor, juga per deserta,
Ah, miser! increpitans sæpè altâ voce per umbram
Nequicquam natos, creditque audire sequentes.
Atque ille excelso rupis de vertice solus
Respectans notasque domos, et dulcia regna,
Nil usquàm videt infelix præter mare tristi
Lumine percussum, et pallentes sulphure campos
Fumumque, flammasque, rotataque turbine saxa.

Quin ubi detonuit fragor, et lux reddita cœlo;
Mæstos confluere agricolas, passuque videres
Tandem iterum timido deserta requirere tecta:
Sperantes, si forte oculis, si forte darentur
Uxorum cineres, miserorumve ossa parentum
(Tenuia, sed tanti saltem solatia luctûs)
Unà colligere et justâ componere in urnâ.
Uxorum nusquam cineres, nusquam ossa parentum
(Spem miseram!) assuetosve Lares, aut rura videbunt.
Quippe ubi planities campi diffusa jacebat;

Mons novus: ille supercilium, frontemque favillâ
Incanum ostentans, ambustis cautibus, æquor
Subjectum, stragemque suam, mæsta arva, minaci
Despicit imperio, soloque in littore regnat.

Hinc infame loci nomen, multosque per annos
Immemor antiquæ laudis, nescire labores
Vomeris, et nullo tellus revirescere cultu.
Non avium colles, non carmine matutino
Pastorum resonare; adeò undique dirus habebat
Informes latè horror agros saltusque vacantes.
Sæpius et longè detorquens navita proram
Monstrabat digito littus, sævæque revolvens
Funera narrabat noctis, veteremque ruinam.

Montis adhuc facies manet hirta atque aspera saxis:
Sed furor extinctus jamdudum, et flamma quievit,
Quæ nascenti aderat; seu fortè bituminis atri
Defluxere olìm rivi, atque effœta lacuna
Pabula sufficere ardori, viresque recusat;
Sive in visceribus meditans incendia jam nunc
(Horrendùm) arcanis glomerat genti esse futuræ
Exitio, sparsos tacitusque recolligit ignes.

Raro per clivos haud secius ordine vidi
Canescentem oleam: longum post tempus amicti
Vite virent tumuli; patriamque revisere gaudens
Bacchus in assuetis tenerum caput exerit arvis
Vix tandem, infidoque audet se credere cœlo.

A FAREWELL TO FLORENCE.

* * * Oh Fæsulæ amœna
Frigoribus juga, nec nimiùm spirantibus auris!
Alma quibus Tusci Pallas decus Apennini
Esse dedit, glaucâque suâ canescere sylvâ!
Non ego vos posthàc Arni de valle videbo
Porticibus circum, et candenti cincta coronâ
Villarum longè nitido consurgere dorso,
Antiquamve Ædem, et veteres præferre Cupressus
Mirabor, tectisque super pendentia tecta.

DIDACTIC POEM UNFINISHED:

ENTITLED,

DE PRINCIPIIS COGITANDI.

LIBER PRIMUS. AD FAVONIUM.

UNDE Animus scire incipiat; quibus inchoet orsa
Principiis seriem rerum, tenuemque catenam
Mnemosyne: Ratio unde rudi sub pectore tardum
Augeat imperium; et primum mortalibus ægris
Ira, Dolor, Metus, et Curæ nascantur inanes,
Hinc canere aggredior. Nec dedignare canentem,
O decus! Angliacæ certe O lux altera gentis!
Si quà primus iter monstras, vestigia conor
Signare incertâ, tremulâque insistere plantâ.
Quin potius duc ipse (potes namque omnia) sanctum
Ad limen (si ritè adeo, si pectore puro,)
Obscuræ reserans Naturæ ingentia claustra.

Tu cæcas rerum causas, fontemque severum
Pande, Pater; tibi enim, tibi, veri magne Sacerdos,
Corda patent hominum, atque altæ penetralia Mentis.

Tuque aures adhibe vacuas, facilesque, Favonî,
(Quod tibi crescit opus) simplex nec despice carmen,
Nec vatem: non illa leves primordia motus,
Quanquam parva, dabunt. Lætum vel amabile quicquid
Usquam oritur, trahit hinc ortum; nec surgit ad auras,
Quin ea conspirent simul, eventusque secundent.
Hinc variæ vitaï artes, ac mollior usus,
Dulce et amicitiæ vinclum: Sapientia dia
Hinc roseum accendit lumen, vultuque sereno
Humanas aperit mentes, nova gaudia monstrans
Deformesque fugat curas, vanosque timores:
Scilicet et rerum crescit pulcherrima Virtus.
Illa etiam, quæ te (mirùm) noctesque diesque
Assiduè fovet inspirans, linguamque sequentem
Temperat in numeros, atque horas mulcet inertes;
Aurea non aliâ se jactat origine Musa.

Principio, ut magnum fœdus Natura creatrix
Firmavit, tardis jussitque inolescere membris
Sublimes animas; tenebroso in carcere partem

Noluit ætheream longo torpere veterno :
Nec per se proprium passa exercere vigorem est,
Ne sociæ molis conjunctos sperneret artus,
Ponderis oblita, et cœlestis conscia flammæ.
Idcircò innumero ductu tremere undique fibras
Nervorum instituit : tum toto corpore miscens
Implicuit latè ramos, et sensile textum,
Implevitque humore suo (seu lympha vocanda,
Sive aura est) tenuis certè, atque levissima quædam
Vis versatur agens, parvosque infusa canales
Perfluit ; assiduè externis quæ concita plagis,
Mobilis, incussique fidelis nuntia motûs,
Hinc indè accensâ contage relabitur usque
Ad superas hominis sedes, arcemque cerebri.
Namque illìc posuit solium, et sua templa sacravit
Mens animi : hanc circum coëunt, densoque feruntur
Agmine notitiæ, simulacraque tenuia rerum :
Ecce autem naturæ ingens aperitur imago
Immensæ, variique patent commercia mundi.

Ac uti longinquis descendunt montibus amnes
Velivolus Tamisis, flaventisque Indus arenæ,
Euphratesque, Tagusque, et opimo flumine Ganges,
Undas quisque suas volvens, cursuque sonoro

In mare prorumpunt: hos magno acclinis in antro
Excipit Oceanus, natorumque ordine longo
Dona recognoscit venientûm, ultròque serenat
Cæruleam faciem, et diffuso marmore ridet.
Haud aliter species properant se inferre novellæ
Certatim menti, atque aditus quino agmine complent.

Primas tactus agit partes, primusque minutæ
Laxat iter cæcum turbæ, recipitque ruentem.
Non idem huic modus est, qui fratribus: amplius ille
Imperium affectat senior, penitusque medullis,
Visceribusque habitat totis, pellîsque recentem
Funditur in telam, et latè per stamina vivit.
Necdum etiam matris puer eluctatus ab alvo
Multiplices solvit tunicas, et vincula rupit;
Sopitus molli somno, tepidoque liquore
Circumfusus adhuc: tactus tamen aura lacessit
Jamdudum levior sensus, animamque reclusit.
Idque magis simul, ac solitum blandumque calorem
Frigore mutavit cœli, quod verberat acri
Impete inassuetos artus: tum sævior adstat
Humanæque comes vitæ Dolor excipit; ille
Cunctantem frustrà et tremulo multa ore querentem
Corripit invadens, ferreisque amplectitur ulnis.

Tum species primùm patefacta est candida Lucis
(Usque vices adeò Natura bonique, malique,
Exæquat, justâque manu sua damna rependit)
Tum primùm, ignotosque bibunt nova lumina soles.

Carmine quo, Dea, te dicam, gratissima cœli
Progenies, ortumque tuum; gemmantia rore
Ut per prata levi lustras, et floribus halans
Purpureum Veris gremium, scenamque virentem
Pingis, et umbriferos colles, et cærula regna?
Gratia te, Venerisque Lepos, et mille Colorum,
Formarumque chorus sequitur, motusque decentes.
At caput invisum Stygiis Nox atra tenebris
Abdidit, horrendæque simul Formidinis ora,
Pervigilesque æstus Curarum, atque anxius Angor:
Undique lætitiâ florent mortalia corda,
Purus et arridet largis fulgoribus Æther.

Omnia nec tu ideò invalidæ se pandere Menti
(Quippe nimis teneros posset vis tanta diei
Perturbare, et inexpertos confundere visus)
Nec capere infantes animos, neu cernere credas
Tam variam molem, et miræ spectacula lucis:
Nescio quâ tamen hæc oculos dulcedine parvos

Splendida percussit novitas, traxitque sequentes;
Nonne videmus enim, latis inserta fenestris
Sicubi se Phœbi dispergant aurea tela,
Sive lucernarum rutilus colluxerit ardor,
Extemplo hùc obverti aciem, quæ fixa repertos
Haurit inexpletum radios, fruiturque tuendo.

Altior huic verò sensu, majorque videtur
Addita, Judicioque arctè connexa potestas,
Quod simul atque ætas volventibus auxerit annis,
Hæc simul, assiduo depascens omnia visu,
Perspiciet, vis quanta loci, quid polleat ordo,
Juncturæ quis honos, ut res accendere rebus
Lumina conjurant inter se, et mutua fulgent.

Nec minor in geminis viget auribus insita virtus,
Nec tantum in curvis quæ pervigil excubet antris
Hinc atque hinc (ubi Vox tremefecerit ostia pulsu
Aëriis invecta rotis) longèque recurset:
Scilicet Eloquio hæc sonitus, hæc fulminis alas,
Et mulcere dedit dictis et tollere corda,
Verbaque metiri numeris, versuque ligare
Repperit, et quicquid discant Libethrides undæ,
Calliope quotiès, quotiès Pater ipse canendi

Evolvat liquidum carmen, calamove loquenti
Inspiret dulces animas, digitisque figuret.

At medias fauces, et linguæ humentia templa
Gustus habet, quà se insinuet jucunda saporum
Luxuries, dona Autumni Bacchique voluptas.

Naribus interea consedit odora hominum vis,
Docta leves captare auras, Panchaïa quales
Vere novo exhalat, Floræve quod oscula fragrant,
Roscida, cum Zephyri furtìm sub vesperis horâ
Respondet votis, mollemque aspirat amorem.

Tot portas altæ capitis circumdedit arci
Alma Parens, sensûsque vias per membra reclusit;
Haud solas: namque intùs agit vivata facultas,
Quâ sese explorat, contemplatusque repentè
Ipse suas animus vires, momentaque cernit.
Quid velit, aut possit, cupiat, fugiatve, vicissìm
Percipit imperio gaudens; neque corpora fallunt
Morigera ad celeres actus, ac numina mentis.

Qualis Hamadryadum quondam si fortè sororum
Una, novos peragrans saltus, et devia rura;

(Atque illam in viridi suadet procumbere ripâ
Fontis pura quies, et opaci frigoris umbra)
Dum prona in latices speculi de margine pendet,
Mirata est subitam venienti occurrere Nympham:
Mox eosdem, quos ipsa, artus, eadem ora gerentem
Unà inferre gradus, unà succedere sylvæ
Aspicit alludens; seseque agnoscit in undis.
Sic sensu interno rerum simulacra suarum
Mens ciet, et proprios observat conscia vultus.
Nec verò simplex ratio, aut jus omnibus unum
Constat imaginibus. Sunt quæ bina ostia nôrunt;
Hæ privos servant aditus; sine legibus illæ
Passìm, quà data porta, ruunt, animoque propinquant.
Respice, cui à cunis tristes extinxit ocellos,
Sæva et in eternas mersit natura tenebras:
Illi ignota dies lucet, vernusque colorum
Offusus nitor est, et vivæ gratia formæ.
Corporis at filum, et motus, spatiumque, locique
Intervalla datur certo dignoscere tactu:
Quandoquidem his iter ambiguum est, et janua duplex,
Exclusæque oculis species irrumpere tendunt
Per digitos. Atqui solis concessa potestas
Luminibus blandæ est radios immittere lucis.

Undique proporrò sociis, quacunque patescit
Notitiæ campus, mistæ lasciva feruntur
Turba voluptatis comites, formæque dolorum
Terribiles visu, et portâ glomerantur in omni.
Nec vario minus introïtu magnum ingruit Illud,
Quo facere et fungi, quo res existere circùm
Quamque sibi proprio cum corpore scimus, et ire
Ordine, perpetuoque per ævum flumine labi.

Nunc age quo valeat pacto, quâ sensilis arte
Affectare viam, atque animi tentare latebras
Materies (dictis aures adverte faventes)
Exsequar. Imprimìs spatii quam multa per æquor
Millia multigenis pandant se corpora seclis,
Expende. Haud unum invenies, quod mente licebit
Amplecti, nedum propriùs deprendere sensu,
Molis egens certæ, aut solido sine robore, cujus
Denique mobilitas linquit, texturave partes,
Ulla nec orarum circumcæsura coërcet.
Hæc conjuncta adeò totâ compage fatetur
Mundus, et extremo clamant in limine rerum,
(Si rebus datur extremum) primordia. Firmat
Hæc eadem tactus (tactum quis dicere falsum
Audeat?) hæc oculi nec lucidus arguit orbis.

Inde potestatum enasci densissima proles;
Nam quodcunque ferit visum, tangive laborat,
Quicquid nare bibis, vel concava concipit auris,
Quicquid lingua sapit, credas hoc omne, necesse est
Ponderibus, textu, discursu, mole, figurâ
Particulas præstare leves, et semina rerum.
Nunc oculos igitur pascunt, et luce ministrâ
Fulgere cuncta vides, spargique coloribus orbem,
Dum de sole trahunt alias, aliasque supernè
Detorquent, retròque docent se vertere flammas.
Nunc trepido inter se fervent corpuscula pulsu,
Ut tremor æthera per magnum, latèque natantes
Aurarum fluctus avidi vibrantia claustra
Auditûs queat allabi, sonitumque propaget.
Cominùs interdum non ullo interprete per se
Nervorum invadunt teneras quatientia fibras,
Sensiferumque urgent ultrò per viscera motum.

* * * * *

LIBER QUARTUS.

Hactenus haud segnis Naturæ arcana retexi
Musarum interpres, primusque Britanna per arva
Romano liquidum deduxi flumine rivum.
Cum Tu opere in medio, spes tanti et causa laboris,
Linquis, et æternam fati te condis in umbram!
Vidi egomet duro graviter concussa dolore
Pectora, in alterius non unquam lenta dolorem;
Et languere oculos vidi, et pallescere amantem
Vultum, quo nunquam Pietas nisi rara, Fidesque,
Altus amor Veri, et purum spirabat Honestum.
Visa tamen tardi demùm inclementia morbi
Cessare est, reducemque iterum roseo ore Salutem
Speravi, atque unà tecum, dilecte Favoni!
Credulus heu longos, ut quondàm, fallere Soles:
Heu spes nequicquam dulces, atque irrita vota!
Heu mæstos Soles, sine te quos ducere flendo
Per desideria, et questus jam cogor inanes!

At Tu, sancta anima, et nostri non indiga luctûs,
Stellanti templo, sincerique ætheris igne,
Unde orta es, fruere; atque ô si secura, nec ultra
Mortalis, notos olìm miserata labores
Respectes, tenuesque vacet cognoscere curas;
Humanam si fortè altâ de sede procellam
Contemplêre, metus, stimulosque cupidinis acres,
Gaudiaque et gemitus, parvoque in corde tumultum
Irarum ingentem, et sævos sub pectore fluctus;
Respice et has lacrymas, memori quas ictus amore
Fundo; quod possum, juxtà lugere sepulchrum
Dum juvat, et mutæ vana hæc jactare favillæ.

* * * * *

ALCAIC ODE,

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE, IN DAUPHINY, AUGUST, 1741.

Oh Tu, severi Religio loci,
Quocunque gaudes nomine (non leve
  Nativa nam certè fluenta
    Numen habet, veteresque sylvas;
Præsentiorem et conspicimus Deum
Per invias rupes, fera per juga,
  Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
    Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem;
Quàm si repostus sub trabe citreâ
Fulgeret auro, et Phidiacâ manu)
  Salve vocanti ritè, fesso et
    Da placidam juveni quietem.

Quod si invidendis sedibus, et frui
Fortuna sacrâ lege silentii
  Vetat volentem, me resorbens
    In medios violenta fluctus:
Saltem remoto des, Pater, angulo
Horas senectæ ducere liberas;
  Tutumque vulgari tumultu
    Surripias, hominumque curis.

PART OF AN HEROIC EPISTLE

FROM SOPHONISBA TO MASINISSA.

Egregium accipio promissi Munus amoris,
  Inque manu mortem, jam fruitura, fero:
Atque utinam citius mandasses, luce vel unâ;
  Transieram Stygios non inhonesta lacus.
Victoris nec passa toros, nova nupta, mariti,
  Nec fueram fastus, Roma superba, tuos.
Scilicet hæc partem tibi, Masinissa, triumphi
  Detractam, hæc pompæ jura minora suæ
Imputat, atque uxor quòd non tua pressa catenis,
  Objecta et sævæ plausibus orbis eo:
Quin tu pro tantis cepisti præmia factis,
  Magnum Romanæ pignus amicitiæ!
Scipiadæ excuses, oro, si, tardius utar
  Munere. Non nimiùm vivere, crede, velim.

Parva mora est, breve sed tempus mea fama requirit:
Detinet hæc amimam cura suprema meam.
Quæ patriæ prodesse meæ Regina ferebar,
Inter Elisæas gloria prima nurus,
Ne videar flammæ nimis indulsisse secundæ,
Vel nimis hostiles extimuisse manus.
Fortunam atque annos liceat revocare priores,
Gaudiaque heu! quantis nostra repensa malis.
Primitiasne tuas meministi atque arma Syphacis
Fusa, et per Tyrias ducta trophæa vias?
(Laudis at antiquæ forsan meminisse pigebit,
Quodque decus quondam causa ruboris erit.)
Tempus ego certe memini, felicia Pœnis
Quo te non puduit solvere vota deis;
Mœniaque intrantem vidi: longo agmine duxit
Turba salutantum, purpureique patres.
Fœminea ante omnes longe admiratur euntem
Hæret et aspectu tota caterva tuo.
Jam flexi, regale decus, per colla capilli,
Jam decet ardenti fuscus in ore color!
Commendat frontis generosa modestia formam,
Seque cupit laudi surripuisse suæ.
Prima genas tenui signat vix flore juventas,
Et dextræ soli credimus esse virum.

Dum faciles gradiens oculos per singula jactas,
(Seu rexit casus lumina, sive Venus)
In me (vel certè visum est) conversa morari
Sensi; virgineus perculit ora pudor.
Nescio quid vultum molle spirare tuendo,
Credideramque tuos lentius ire pedes.
Quærebam, juxta æqualis si dignior esset,
Quæ poterat visus detinuisse tuos:
Nulla fuit circum æqualis quæ dignior esset,
Asseruitque decus conscia forma suum.
Pompæ finis erat. Totâ vix nocte quievi,
Sin premat invitæ lumina victa sopor,
Somnus habet pompas, eademque recursat imago;
Atque iterum hesterno munere victor ades.

* * * * *

GREEK EPIGRAM.

Ἀζόμενος πολύθηρον ἐκηβόλου ἄλσος ἀνάσσας,
Τᾶς δεινᾶς τεμένη λεῖπε κυναγὲ θεᾶς,
Μοῦνοι ἄρ᾽ ἔνθα κύνων ζαθέων κλαγγεῦσιν ὑλάγμοι,
Ἀνταχεῖς Νυμφᾶν ἀγροτερᾶν κελάδῳ.

TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS.

STATIUS. THEB.

LIB. VI. VER. 704—724.

THIRD in the labours of the disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon;
Artful and strong he poised the well-known weight
By Phlegyas warn'd, and fired by Mnestheus' fate,
That to avoid, and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he tried before he flung,
Braced all his nerves, and every sinew strung;
Then, with a tempest's whirl, and wary eye,
Pursued his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high:
The orb on high tenacious of its course,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,

Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory.
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall;
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.
As when from Ætna's smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heaved the craggy rock;
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar.
And parting surges round the vessel roar;
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses scaped his giant arm.
A tiger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay,
A shining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold.

Cambridge, May 8, 1736.

TASSO GERUS. LIB.

CANT. XIV. ST. 32.

"Preser commiato, e sì 'l desio gli sprona," &c.

Dismiss'd at length, they break through all delay
To tempt the dangers of the doubtful way;
And first to Ascalon their steps they bend,
Whose walls along the neighbouring sea extend,
Nor yet in prospect rose the distant shore;
Scarce the hoarse waves from far were heard to roar,
When thwart the road a river roll'd its flood
Tempestuous, and all further course withstood;
The torrent stream his ancient bounds disdains,
Swollen with new force, and late-descending rains.
Irresolute they stand; when lo, appears
The wondrous Sage: vigorous he seem'd in years,

Awful his mien, low as his feet there flows
A vestment unadorn'd, though white as new-fall'n snows;
Against the stream the waves secure he trod,
His head a chaplet bore, his hand a rod.

As on the Rhine, when Boreas' fury reigns,
And winter binds the floods in icy chains,
Swift shoots the village-maid in rustic play
Smooth, without step, adown the shining way,
Fearless in long excursion loves to glide,
And sports and wantons o'er the frozen tide.

So moved the Seer, but on no harden'd plain;
The river boil'd beneath, and rush'd toward the main.
Where fix'd in wonder stood the warlike pair,
His course he turn'd, and thus relieved their care:

"Vast, oh my friends, and difficult the toil
To seek your hero in a distant soil!
No common helps, no common guide ye need,
Art it requires, and more than winged speed.
What length of sea remains, what various lands,
Oceans unknown, inhospitable sands!

For adverse fate the captive chief has hurl'd
Beyond the confines of our narrow world:
Great things and full of wonder in your ears
I shall unfold; but first dismiss your fears;
Nor doubt with me to tread the downward road
That to the grotto leads, my dark abode."

Scarce had he said, before the warriors' eyes
When mountain-high the waves disparted rise;
The flood on either hand its billows rears,
And in the midst a spacious arch appears.
Their hands he seized, and down the steep he led
Beneath the obedient river's inmost bed;
The watery glimmerings of a fainter day
Discover'd half, and half conceal'd their way;
As when athwart the dusky woods by night
The uncertain crescent gleams a sickly light.
Through subterraneous passages they went,
Earth's inmost cells, and caves of deep descent;
Of many a flood they view'd the secret source,
The birth of rivers rising to their course,
Whate'er with copious train its channel fills,
Floats into lakes, and bubbles into rills;

The Po was there to see, Danubius' bed,
Euphrates' fount, and Nile's mysterious head.
Further they pass, where ripening minerals flow,
And embryon metals undigested glow,
Sulphureous veins and living silver shine,
Which soon the parent sun's warm powers refine,
In one rich mass unite the precious store,
The parts combine and harden into ore:
Here gems break through the night with glittering beam,
And paint the margin of the costly stream,
All stones of lustre shoot their vivid ray,
And mix attemper'd in a various day;
Here the soft emerald smiles of verdant hue,
And rubies flame, with sapphire's heavenly blue,
The diamond there attracts the wondrous sight,
Proud of its thousand dies and luxury of light.

1738. Æt. 22.

PROPERTIUS,

LIB. III. ELEG. V. v. 19.

"Me juvat in primâ coluisse Helicona juventâ," &c.

IMITATED.

Long as of youth the joyous hours remain,
Me may Castalia's sweet recess detain,
Fast by the umbrageous vale lull'd to repose,
Where Aganippe warbles as it flows;
Or roused by sprightly sounds from out the trance,
I'd in the ring knit hands, and join the Muses' dance.
Give me to send the laughing bowl around,
My soul in Bacchus' pleasing fetters bound;
Let on this head unfading flowers reside,
There bloom the vernal rose's earliest pride;
And when, our flames commission'd to destroy,
Age step 'twixt Love and me, and intercept the joy;

When my changed head these locks no more shall know,
And all its jetty honours turn to snow;
Then let me rightly spell of Nature's ways;
To Providence, to HIM my thoughts I'd raise,
Who taught this vast machine its steadfast laws,
That first, eternal, universal cause;
Search to what regions yonder star retires,
That monthly waning hides her paly fires,
And whence, anew revived, with silver light
Relumes her crescent orb to cheer the dreary night:
How rising winds the face of ocean sweep,
Where lie the eternal fountains of the deep,
And whence the cloudy magazines maintain
Their wintry war, or pour the autumnal rain;
How flames perhaps, with dire confusion hurl'd,
Shall sink this beauteous fabric of the world;
What colours paint the vivid arch of Jove;
What wondrous force the solid earth can move,
When Pindus' self approaching ruin dreads,
Shakes all his pines, and bows his hundred heads;
Why does yon orb, so exquisitely bright,
Obscure his radiance in a short-lived night;
Whence the Seven-Sisters' congregated fires,
And what Bootes' lazy wagon tires;

How the rude surge its sandy bounds control;
Who measured out the year, and bade the seasons roll;
If realms beneath those fabled torments know,
Pangs without respite, fires that ever glow,
Earth's monster brood stretch'd on their iron bed,
The hissing terrors round Alecto's head,
Scarce to nine acres Tityus' bulk confined,
The triple dog that scares the shadowy kind,
All angry heaven inflicts, or hell can feel,
The pendent rock, Ixion's whirling wheel,
Famine at feasts, or thirst amid the stream;
Or are our fears the enthusiast's empty dream,
And all the scenes, that hurt the grave's repose,
But pictured horror and poetic woes.

These soft inglorious joys my hours engage;
Be love my youth's pursuit, and science crown my age.

1738. Æt. 22.

PROPERTIUS,

LIB. II. ELEG. I. v. 17

"Quod mihi si tantum, Mæcenas, fata dedissent," &c.

YET would the tyrant Love permit me raise
My feeble voice, to sound the victor's praise,
To paint the hero's toil, the ranks of war,
The laurell'd triumph and the sculptured car;
No giant race, no tumult of the skies,
No mountain-structures in my verse should rise,
Nor tale of Thebes, nor Ilium there should be,
Nor how the Persian trod the indignant sea;
Not Marius' Cimbrian wreaths would I relate,
Nor lofty Carthage struggling with her fate.
Here should Augustus great in arms appear,
And thou, Mecænas, be my second care;
Here Mutina from flames and famine free,
And there the ensanguined wave of Sicily,

And sceptred Alexandria's captive shore,
And sad Philippi, red with Roman gore:
Then, while the vaulted skies loud ïos rend,
In golden chains should loaded monarchs bend,
And hoary Nile with pensive aspect seem
To mourn the glories of his sevenfold stream,
While prows, that late in fierce encounter met,
Move through the sacred way and vainly threat,
Thee too the Muse should consecrate to fame,
And with her garlands weave thy ever-faithful name.

But nor Callimachus' enervate strain
May tell of Jove, and Phlegra's blasted plain;
Nor I with unaccustom'd vigour trace
Back to its source divine the Julian race.
Sailors to tell of winds and seas delight,
The shepherd of his flocks, the soldier of the fight,
A milder warfare I in verse display;
Each in his proper art should waste the day:
Nor thou my gentle calling disapprove,
To die is glorious in the bed of Love.

Happy the youth, and not unknown to fame,
Whose heart has never felt a second flame.

Oh, might that envied happiness be mine!
To Cynthia all my wishes I confine;
Or if, alas! it be my fate to try
Another love, the quicker let me die:
But she, the mistress of my faithful breast,
Has oft the charms of constancy confest,
Condemns her fickle sex's fond mistake,
And hates the tale of Troy for Helen's sake.
Me from myself the soft enchantress stole;
Ah! let her ever my desires control,
Or if I fall the victim of her scorn,
From her loved door may my pale corse be borne.
The power of herbs can other harms remove,
And find a cure for every ill, but love.
The Lemnian's hurt Machaon could repair,
Heal the slow chief, and send again to war;
To Chiron Phœnix owed his long-lost sight,
And Phœbus' son recall'd Androgeon to the light.
Here arts are vain, e'en magic here must fail,
The powerful mixture and the midnight spell;
The hand that can my captive heart release,
And to this bosom give its wonted peace,
May the long thirst of Tantalus allay,
Or drive the infernal vulture from his prey.

For ills unseen what remedy is found?
Or who can probe the undiscover'd wound?
The bed avails not, nor the leech's care,
Nor changing skies can hurt, nor sultry air.
'Tis hard the elusive symptoms to explore:
To-day the lover walks, to-morrow is no more;
A train of mourning friends attend his pall,
And wonder at the sudden funeral.

When then the fates that breath they gave shall claim,
And the short marble but preserve a name,
A little verse my all that shall remain;
Thy passing courser's slacken'd speed restrain;
(Thou envied honour of thy poet's days,
Of all our youth the ambition and the praise!)
Then to my quiet urn awhile draw near,
And say, while o'er that place you drop the tear,
Love and the fair were of his youth the pride;
He lived, while she was kind; and when she frown'd, he died.

April, 1742. Æt. 26.

IMITATION OF AN ITALIAN SONNET

OF SIGNIOR ABBATE BUONDELMONTE.

Spesso Amor sotto la forma
D'amistà ride, e s'asconde:
Poi si mischia, e si confonde
Con lo sdegno, e col rancor.
In Pietade ei si trasforma;
Par trastullo, e par dispetto:
Mà nel suo diverso aspetto
Sempr' egli, è l' istesso Amor.

Lusit amicitiæ interdum velatus amictu,
Et benè compositâ veste fefellit Amor.
Mox iræ assumpsit cultus, faciemque minantem,
Inque odium versus, versus et in lacrymas:
Ludentem fuge, nec lacrymanti, aut crede furenti;
Idem est dissimili semper in ore Deus.

PETRARCA,

PART I. SONETTO 170.

"Lasso ch' i' ardo, ed altri non mel crede;" &c.

IMITATED.

Uror, io; veros at nemo credidet ignes:
Quin credunt omnes; dura sed illa negat,
Illa negat, soli volumus cui posse probare;
Quin videt, et visos improba dissimulat.
Ah, durissima mî, sed et, ah, pulcherrima rerum!
Nonne animam in miserâ, Cynthia, fronte vides?
Omnibus illa pia est; et, si non fata vetâssent,
Tam longas mentem flecteret ad lacrymas.
Sed tamen has lacrymas, hunc tu, quem spreveris, ignem,
Carminaque auctori non bene culta suo,
Turba futurorum non ignorabit amantûm:

Nos duo, cumque erimus parvus uterque cinis,
Jamque faces, eheu! oculorum, et frigida lingua,
Hæ sine luce jacent, immemor illa loqui;
Infelix musa æternos spirabit amores,
Ardebitque urnâ multa favilla meâ.

FROM THE ANTHOLOGIA GRÆCA.

EDIT. HEN. STEPH. 1566.

IN BACCHÆ FURENTIS STATUAM.

CREDITE, non viva est Mænas; non spirat imago:
Artificis rabiem miscuit ære manus.

IN ALEXANDRUM, ÆRE EFFICTUM.

QUANTUM audet, Lysippe, manus tua! surgit in ære
Spiritus, atque oculis bellicus ignis adest:
Spectate hos vultus, miserisque ignoscite Persis:
Quid mirum, imbelles si leo sparsit oves?

IN MEDEÆ IMAGINEM, NOBILE TIMOMACHI OPUS.

EN ubi Medeæ varius dolor æstuat ore,
Jamque animum nati, jamque maritus, habent!

Succenset, miseret, medio exardescit amore,
Dum furor inque oculo gutta minante tremit.
Cernis adhuc dubiam; quid enim? licet impia matris
Colchidos, at non sit dextera Timomachi.

IN NIOBES STATUAM.

Fecerat e vivâ lapidem me Jupiter; at me
Praxiteles vivam reddidit e lapide.

A NYMPH OFFERING A STATUE OF HERSELF TO VENUS.

Te tibi, sancta, fero nudam; formosius ipsa
Cum tibi, quod ferrem, te, Dea, nil habui.

IN AMOREM DORMIENTEM.

Docte puer vigiles mortalibus addere curas,
Anne potest in te somnus habere locum?
Laxi juxta arcus, et fax suspensa quiescit,
Dormit et in pharetrâ clausa sagitta suâ;
Longè mater abest; longè Cythereïa turba:
Verùm ausint alii te prope ferre pedem,

Non ego; nam metui valdè, mihi, perfide, quiddam
Forsan et in somnis ne meditere mali.

FROM A FRAGMENT OF PLATO.

Itur in Idalios tractus, felicia regna,
Fundit ubi densam myrtea sylva comam,
Intus Amor teneram visus spirare quietem,
Dum roseo roseos imprimit ore toros;
Sublimem procul a ramis pendere pharetram,
Et de languidulâ spicula lapsa manu,
Vidimus, et risu molli diducta labella
Murmure quæ assiduo pervolitabat apis.

IN FONTEM AQUÆ CALIDÆ.

Sub platanis puer Idalius prope fluminis undam
Dormiit, in ripâ deposuitque facem.
Tempus adest, sociæ, Nympharum audentior una,
Tempus adest, ultra quid dubitamus? ait.
Ilicet incurrit, pestem ut divûmque hominumque
Lampada collectis exanimaret aquis:
Demens! nam nequiit sævam restinguere flammam
Nympha, sed ipsa ignes traxit, et inde calet.

Irrepsisse suas murem videt Argus in ædes,
Atque ait, heus, a me nunquid, amice, velis?
Ille autem ridens, metuas nihil, inquit; apud te,
O bone, non epulas, hospitium petimus.

Hanc tibi Rufinus mittit, Rodoclea, coronam,
Has tibi decerpens texerat ipse rosas;
Est viola, est anemòne, est suave-rubens hyacynthus,
Mistaque Narcisso lutea caltha suo:
Sume; sed aspiciens, ah, fidere desine formæ;
Qui pinxit, brevis est, sertaque teque, color.

AD AMOREM.

Paulisper vigiles, oro, compesce dolores,
Respue nec musæ supplicis aure preces;
Oro brevem lacrymis veniam, requiemque furori:
Ah, ego non possum vulnera tanta pati!
Intima flamma, vides, miseros depascitur artus,
Surgit et extremis spiritus in labiis:
Quòd si tam tenuem cordi est exsolvere vitam,
Stabit in opprobrium sculpta querela tuum.

Juro perque faces istas, arcumque sonantem,
Spiculaque hoc unum figere docta jecur;
Heu fuge crudelem puerum, sævasque sagittas!
Huic fuit exitii causa, viator, Amor.

NOTES.

NOTES.

Page 105. *Commendatory Poems.*

The Sonnet by the Rev. John Mitford is taken from the Aldine Edition: and the Stanzas by the Rev. John Moultrie from the Illustrated Eton Edition. The latter poem is given entire, although only part of it refers to Gray, (Stan. IX. to XXI.) In other parts of the poem there will be recognised allusions to a later and to an earlier Etonian, of very different kind of celebrity. It may be proper to explain that stanzas VI. to IX. refer to the late Marquess Wellesley, Richard, the elder brother of the Duke of Wellington. After a long public career, distinguished by many and various political services, in civil life he gave a remarkable proof of the permanence of Eton training, and of fine scholarship, in his "*Primitiæ et Reliquiæ*," a volume of Latin poems, printed for private distribution in the eighty-first year of his age. The beauty and classical correctness of these compositions have placed Lord Wellesley in the first rank of modern Latin versifiers.

He died, Sept. 26, 1842, at the age of eighty-three, having expressed his affection for Eton, by the desire in his Will to be buried within the precincts of the ancient seminary where he had received his early education—a request which was fulfilled by his funeral in the Chapel of Eton College. See Pearce's Life of Lord Wellesley, vol. iii. *ad fin.*, and Creasy's Memoirs of Eminent Etonians.

The fine poetic comment—so true in judgment and so beautiful in feeling—upon the character and life of Shelley, will be recognised in the stanzas XXII. to XXX.—*R.*

Page 129. *O'er-canopies the glade.*

A bank o'er-canopied with luscious woodbine. Mids. N. Dr. act ii. sec. 2.—*Gray.*

Page 130. *And float amid the liquid noon.*

"Nare per æstatem liquidam." Georg. iv. 59.—*Gray.*

Page 130. *Quick glancing to the sun.*

"Sporting with quick glance
Show to the sun their wavéd coats dropped with gold."
Par. Lost, vii. 410.—*Gray.*

Page 131. *To Contemplation's sober eye.*

"While insects from the threshold preach." Greene, in "The Grotto"; Dodsley, Misc. v. p. 161.—*Gray.*

In a letter to H. Walpole (Walpole's Works, v. p. 395), Gray acknowledges obligations to Green's "Grotto," for the

thought on which the Ode to Spring turns. "It imprinted itself," he says, "on my memory, and, forgetting the author, I took it for my own."—*R.*

Page 132.

See Wordsworth's criticism on the diction of this Sonnet, in the preface to the "Lyrical Ballads." Appendix to the collective edition of Wordsworth's Poetical Works.—*R.*

Page 133. *Her Henry's holy shade.*

So in the Bard, ii. 3: "And spare the meek usurper's *holy-head.*" And in Install. Ode, iv. 12: "the murdered *saint.*" So Rich. III. ac. v. sc. 1: "*Holy* King Henry." And act iv. sc. iv: "When *holy Henry* died." This epithet has a peculiar propriety, as Henry the Sixth, though never canonized, was regarded as a *saint.* See Barrington on the Statutes, p. 416, and Douce. Illust. of Shaksp. ii. 38. "Yea and *holy Henry* lying at Windsor." Barclay. Eclog. p. 4, fol.

Page 134. *And redolent of joy and youth.*

"And bees their honey *redolent of spring.*" Dryden's Fable on the Pythag. System.—*Gray.*

Page 137. *And moody Madness laughing wild.*

"*Madness* laughing in his ireful *mood:*" Dryden, Pal. and Arc. (b. ii. p. 43, ed. Aik.)—*Gray.*

I am tempted to introduce here Lord Wellesley's lines.

entitled "*Salix Babylonica*," for the sake of the affectionate recollections of Eton so finely expressed in them, and the no less admirable aspirations for the welfare of the great school, which was endeared to him both by personal gratitude and a sense of its influence on the destinies of his country. The occasion of these lines was the sight of some willows overhanging the Thames, in the grounds of the house occupied by Lord Wellesley, near Eton: they are of the species introduced from the East, called "The Willow of Babylon:"—

Passis mœsta comis, formosa doloris imago,
  Quæ, flenti similis, pendet in amne salix,
Euphratis nata in ripâ Babylone sub altâ
  Dicitur Hebræas sustinuisse lyras;
Cum terrâ ignotâ proles Solymæa, refugit
  Divinum patriæ jussa movere melos;
Suspensisque lyris, et luctu muta, sedebat,
  In lacrymis memorans Te, veneranda Sion!
Te, dilecta Sion! frustra sacrata Jehovæ,
  Te, præsenti Ædes irradiata Deo!
Nunc pede barbarico, et manibus temerata profanis,
  Nunc orbata Tuis, et taciturna Domus!
At tu pulchra Salix Thamesini littoris hospes,
  Sis sacra, et nobis pignora sacra feras!
Quâ cecidit Judæa, mones, captiva sub irâ,
  Victricem stravit quæ Babylona manus;
Inde, doces, sacra et ritus servare Parentum,
  Juraque, et antiquâ vi stabilire Fidem.

Me quoties curas suadent lenire seniles
Umbra tua et viridi ripa beata toro,
Sit mihi, primitiasque meas tenuesque, triumphos
Sit revocare tuos, dulcis Etona! dies.
Auspice te, summæ mirari culmina famæ,
Et purum antiquæ lucis adire jubar,
Edidici Puer, et jam primo in limine vitæ—
Ingenuas veræ laudis amare vias:
O juncta Aonidum lauro præcepta salutis
Æternæ! et Musis consociata Fides!
O felix Doctrina! et divinâ insita luce;
Quæ tuleras animo lumina fausta meo!
Incorrupta, precor, maneas, atque integra, neu te
Aura regat populi, neu novitatis amor:
Stet quoque prisca Domus; (neque enim manus impia
Floreat in mediis intemerata minis. [tangat;)
Det Patribus Patres, populoque det inclyta Cives,
Eloquiumque Foro, Judiciisque decus,
Consiliisque animos, magnæque det ordine Genti
Immortalem altâ cum pietate Fidem.
Floreat, intactâ per postera secula famâ,
Cura diu Patriæ, Cura paterna Dei.—*R.*

Page 141. *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat.*

On a favourite cat called Selima, that fell into a China tub with gold fishes in it, and was drowned, MS. Wharton. Walpole, after the death of Gray, placed the China vase on a pedestal at Strawberry Hill, with a few lines of the ode for its inscription.

Page 144. *The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.*

Mr. Nicholls, in his "*Reminiscences of Gray*," writes: "When I found in the Purgatorio of Dante the verses from which the beginning of the Elegy is imitated,

's'odi squilla di lontano
Che paia 'l giorno pianger, che si muore;"

he (Gray) acknowledged the imitation, and said he had at first written 'tolls the knell of *dying* day,' but changed it to '*parting*' to avoid the *concetto*." Works of Gray, Aldine edit. v. p. 45.—*R.*

Page 149. *Muttering his wayward fancies would he rove.*

The reading adopted by Mr. Mitford in the Aldine Edition is, "he would rove": it is changed on the authority of the facsimile of the poet's handwriting in Mathias's Edition of Gray. A correspondent of "*Notes and Queries*," No. 14, Feb. 2d, 1850, also states, that at the sale of Mason's collection of Gray's books and MS., in 1845, he purchased Gray's copy of Dodsley's collection, (2d edition, 1758,) with corrections in the poet's own hand, and that among these the 27th stanza is altered from "he would rove" to "would he rove."—*R.*

Page 153. *A Long Story.*

Gray's Elegy in a Country Church-yard, previous to its publication, was handed about in manuscript; and had among other admirers the Lady Cobham, who resided at

the mansion-house at Stoke-Pogeis. The performance inducing her to wish for the author's acquaintance, her relation, Miss Speed, and Lady Schaub, then at her house, undertook to effect it. These two ladies waited upon the author at his aunt's solitary habitation, where he at that time resided; and not finding him at home, they left a card behind them. Mr. Gray, surprised at such a compliment, returned the visit. And as the beginning of this acquaintance bore some appearance of romance, he soon after gave a humorous account of it in the verses, which he entitled "A Long Story." Printed in 1753, with Mr. Bentley's designs, and repeated in a second edition.

This Poem was rejected by Gray in the collection published by himself; and though published afterwards by Mason in his Memoirs of Gray, he placed it among the Letters, together with the Posthumous Pieces; not thinking himself authorized to insert among the Poems, what the author had rejected.

See a *Sequel* to the Long Story in Hakewill's History of Windsor, by John Penn, Esq., and a farther Sequel to that, by the late Laureate, H. J. Pye, Esq.

Page 153. *An ancient pile of building stands.*

The mansion-house at Stoke-Pogeis, then in the possession of Viscountess Cobham. The house formerly belonged to the earls of Huntingdon and the family of Hatton. —*Mason.* Sir Edmond Coke's mansion at Stoke-Pogeis, now the seat of Mr. Penn, was the scene of Gray's Long

Story. The antique chimneys have been allowed to remain as vestiges of the poet's fancy, and a column with a statue of Coke marks the former abode of its illustrious inhabitant. D'Israeli, Cur. of Lit. (New Ser.) i. 482. Coke married Lady Hatton. relict of Sir William Hatton, sister of Lord Burlington.

Page 153. *My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls.*

Sir Christopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful person and fine dancing.—*Gray.*

Brawls were a sort of French figure-dance, then in vogue. See England's Helicon, p. 101; Brown's Poems, vol. iii. p. 149, ed. Thompson; and the note by Steevens to Love's Lab. Lost, act iii. sc. 1. And so Ben Jonson, in a Masque, vol. vi. p. 27, ed. Whalley:—

"And thence did Venus learn to *lead*
The Idalian *brawls.*"

But see more particularly Marston, Malcontent, act iv. sc. 2, where it is described:—

"We have forgot the brawl," &c.
See Dodsley, Old Plays, vol. ii. p. 210.

Page 155. *Fame, in the shape of Mr. P—t.*

It has been said, that this gentleman, a neighbour and acquaintance of Gray's in the country, was much displeased with the liberty here taken with his name: yet, surely, without any great reason.—*Mason.* Mr. Robert Purt was Fellow of King's Coll. Cant. 1738, A. B. 1742, A. M. 1746,

was an assistant at Eton school, tutor to Lord Baltimore's son there, and afterwards to the Duke of Bridgewater; in 1749 he was presented to the rectory of Settrington in Yorkshire which he held with Dorrington in the same county. He died in April, 1752, of the small pox.—*Isaac Reed.*

Page 155. *She'd issue out her high commission.*

Henry the Fourth, in the fourth year of his reign, issued out the following *commission* against this species of *vermin:* "And it is enacted, that no master-rimour, minstrel, or other *vagabond*, be in any wise sustained in the land of Wales, to make commoiths, or gatherings upon the people there." "*Vagabond,*" says Ritson, "was a title to which the profession had been long accustomed."

"Beggars they are with one consent,
And rogues by act of parliament."

Pref. to Anc. Songs, p. xi.

Page 158. *Tyack has often seen the sight.*

Tyack, the housekeeper.—*G.*

The edition of Gray, published by Sharpe, London, 1821, adds the following note:—

"Her name, which has hitherto, in all editions of Gray's poems, been written 'Styack,' is corrected from her grave-stone in the churchyard, and the accounts of contemporary persons in the parish; housekeepers are usually styled 'Mrs.'; the final S doubtless caused the name to be misapprehended and misspelt."—*R.*

Page 159. *Disproved the arguments of Squib.*

Squib, groom of the chamber.—*G.*

Page 159. *Groom.*

Groom, the steward.—*G.*

Sharpe's edition further mentions: "The former has hitherto been styled *groom* of the *chamber,* and the latter *steward;* but the legend on a gravestone close to Tyack's, is to the memory of *William* Groom, and appears to offer evidence that Gray mistook the *name* of the one for the *office* of the other."—*R.*

Page 159. *He stood as mute as poor Macleane.*

Macleane, a famous highwayman, hanged the week before.—*G.*

Page 161. *The Progress of Poesy.*

Gray, in communicating this ode to his friend Dr. Wharton, in a letter, dated December 26, 1754, entitled it "*Ode in the Greek Manner.*"—*R.*

When the author first published this and the following ode, he was advised, even by his friends, to subjoin some few explanatory notes; but had too much respect for the understanding of his readers to take that liberty.—*Gray.*

Page 161. *Awake, Æolian lyre, awake.*

"Awake, my glory: awake, lute and harp."

David's Psalms.—*Gray.*

"Awake, awake, my lyre,
And tell thy silent master's humble tale."

Cowley, Ode of David, vol. ii. p. 423.

Pindar styles his own poetry, with its musical accompaniments, Αἰολὶς μολπὴ, Αἰολίδες χορδαὶ, Αἰολίδων πνοαὶ αὐλῶν, Æolian song, Æolian strings, the breath of the Æolian flute.—*Gray.*

The subject and simile, as usual with Pindar, are united. The various sources of poetry, which gives life and lustre to all it touches, are here described; its quiet majestic progress enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with a pomp of diction and luxuriant harmony of numbers; and its more rapid and irresistible course when swoln and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions.—*Gray.*

Page 162. *Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul.*

Power of harmony to calm the turbulent sallies of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar.—*Gray.*

Page 162. *Perching on the sceptered hand.*

This is a weak imitation of some beautiful lines in the same ode.—*Gray.*

Page 162. *Thee the voice, the dance, obey.*

Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.—*Gray.*

Page 162. *Glance their many-twinkling feet.*

Μαρμαρυγὰς ϑηεῖτο ποδῶν· ϑαύμαζε δέ ϑυμῷ.

Hom. Od. Θ. ver. 265.—*Gray.*

Page 163. *The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.*

Λάμπει δ' ἐπὶ πορφυρέῃσί

Παρείῃσι φῶς ἔρωτος.

Phrynicus apud Athenæum.—*Gray.*

"—— *lumen*que juventæ
Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflârat honores."

Virg. Æn. i. 594.—*W.*

Page 163. *Man's feeble race what ills await.*

To compensate the real and imaginary ills of life, the Muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sends the day, by its cheerful presence, to dispel the gloom and terrors of the night.—*Gray.*

Page 164. *Till down the eastern cliffs afar.*

"Or seen the morning's well appointed star
Come marching up the eastern hills afar."

Cowley.—*Gray.*

The couplet from Cowley has been wrongly quoted by

Gray, and so continued by his different editors. It occurs in Brutus, an ode, stan. iv. p. 171, vol. 1, Hurd's ed.:—

"One would have thought 't had heard the morning crow,
Or seen her well-appointed star
Come marching up the eastern hills afar."

In Gray's letter to Dr. Wharton, containing a Journal of his Tour to the Lakes, he says: "While I was here, a little shower fell, red *clouds came marching up the hills from the east,*" &c. Aldine edition, vol. iv. p. 153.

Page 164. *In climes beyond the solar road.*

Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations: its connection with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it. [See the Erse, Norwegian, and Welsh fragments, the Lapland and American songs.]

"Extra anni solisque vias—" Virg. Æn. vi. 795.
"Tutta lontana dal camin del sole." Petr. Canz. 2.—*Gray.*

Page 165. *Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep.*

Progress of poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there. Spenser imitated the Italian writers; Milton improved on them: but this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since.—*Gray.*

Page 165. *In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid.*

"Nature's darling." Shakspeare.—*Gray.* This expression occurs in Cleveland's Poems, p. 314 :—

"Here lies within this stony shade,
Nature's darling; whom she made
Her fairest model, her brief story
In him heaping all her glory."

Stat. Theb. iv. 1786, "At puer in gremio vernæ telluris."

"The flowery May, who from her *green lap* throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose."
Milton, Son. on May Morn.—*Gray.*

Page 166. *Nor second He, that rode sublime.*

Milton, P. L. vi. 771.—*Gray.*

Page 166. *He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time.*

"Flammantia mœnia mundi," Lucret. i. 74.—*Gray.* See also Stat. Silv. iv. 3, 156: "Ultra sidera, flammeumque solem." And Cicero de Finibus, ii. 31. Hor. Epist. I. xiv. 9.

Page 166. *The living throne, the sapphire blaze.*

"For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord." Ezek. i. 20, 26, 28.—*Gray.*

Page 166. *Closed his eyes in endless night.*

Οφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε· διδου δ' ἡδεῖαν ἀοιδήν.
Hom. Od. Θ. ver. 64.—*Gray.*

Page 167. *With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.*

"Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"—Job. This verse and the foregoing are meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhymes. —*Gray.*

Gray, in his Treatise, entitled, "Some Remarks on the Poems of Lydgate," speaks of "Dryden, in whose admirable ear the music of our old versification still sounded." Gray's Works, Aldine edition, v. p. 303.—*R.*

Page 167. *Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.*

"Words that weep, and tears that speak." Cowley, Prophet, vol. i. p. 113.—*Gray.*

Page 167. *But ah! 'tis heard no more.*

We have had in our language no other odes of the sublime kind, than that of Dryden on St. Cecilia's Day; for Cowley, who had his merit, yet wanted judgment, style, and harmony, for such a task. That of Pope is not worthy of so great a man. Mr. Mason, indeed, of late days, has touched the true chords, and with a masterly hand, in

some of his choruses; above all in the last of Caractacus:—

"Hark! heard ye not yon footstep dread?" &c.—*Gray.*

Page 167. *That the Theban eagle bear.*

Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον, Olymp. ii. 159. Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamour in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise.—*Gray.*

Page 168. *The Bard.*

This Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.—*Gray.*

The original argument of this ode, as Mr. Gray had set it down in one of the pages of his common-place book, was as follows: "The army of Edward I., as they march through a deep valley, (and approach Mount Snowdon, MS.) are suddenly stopped by the appearance of a venerable figure seated on the summit of an inaccessible rock, who, with a voice more than human, reproaches the king with all the misery and desolation (desolation and misery, MS.) which he had brought on his country; foretells the misfortunes of the Norman race, and with prophetic spirit declares, that all his cruelty shall never extinguish the noble ardour of poetic genius in this island; and that men shall never be wanting to celebrate true virtue and valour in im-

mortal strains, to expose vice and infamous pleasure, and boldly censure tyranny and oppression. His song ended, he precipitates himself from the mountain, and is swallowed up by the river that rolls at its foot."

"Mr. Smith, the musical composer and worthy pupil of Mr. Handel, had once an idea of setting this ode, and of having it performed by way of serenata or oratorio. A common friend of his and Mr. Gray's interested himself much in this design, and drew out a clear analysis of the ode, that Mr. Smith might more perfectly understand the poet's meaning. He conversed also with Mr. Gray on the subject, who gave him an idea of the overture, and marked also some passages in the ode, in order to ascertain which should be recitative, which air, what kind of air, and how accompanied. This design was, however, not executed; and therefore I shall only (in order to give the reader a taste of Mr. Gray's musical feelings) insert in this place what his sentiments were concerning the overture. 'It should be so contrived as to be a proper introduction to the ode; it might consist of two movements, the first descriptive of the horror and confusion of battle, the last a march grave and majestic, but expressing the exultation and insolent security of conquest. This movement should be composed entirely of wind instruments, except the kettle-drum heard at intervals. The *da capo* of it must be suddenly broke in upon, and put to silence by the clang of the harp in a tumultuous rapid movement, joined with the voice, all at once, and not ushered in by any symphony. The har-

mony may be strengthened by any other stringed instrument; but the harp should everywhere prevail, and form the continued running accompaniment, submitting itself to nothing but the voice.'"—*Mason.*

Page 168. *They mock the air with idle state.*

"Mocking the air with colours idly spread."
King John, act v. sc. 1.—*Gray.*

Page 168. *Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail.*

The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.—*Gray.*

Page 168. *Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride.*

"The crested adder's pride."
Dryden, Indian Queen.—*Gray.*

Page 168. *As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side.*

Snowdon was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welsh themselves call Craigian-eryri: it included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway. R. Hygden, speaking of the castle of Conway, built by King Edward the First, says, "Ad ortum amnis Conway ad clivum montis Erery;" and Matthew of Westminster, (ad ann. 1283,) "Apud Aberconway ad pedes montis Snowdoniæ fecit erigi castrum forte."—*Gray.*

Page 168. *Stout Glos'ter stood aghast in speechless trance.*

Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward.—*Gray.*

Page 168. *"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quivering lance.*

Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore.—*Gray.*

They both were Lord Marchers, whose hands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition.—*Gray.*

Page 169. *Frowns o'er cold Conway's foaming flood.*

Mr. Wilmott, in his very pleasing "Journal of Summer-time in the Country," remarks: "A visitor to Wales, in the early part of the present century, objected to the description in 'The Bard,' of the 'foaming Conway.' And having imagined an error, he suggests this occasion of it: 'Gray probably supposed the Conway to resemble the mountain torrents of Wales, of which the course is troubled and impetuous, although observation would have informed him that the Conway flows in a tranquil current through the valley.' This is sufficiently well. But Gray knew the Conway and its character. He chose a moment of tempest for the action of the ode, and treated the river with poetic liberty; the storm lashed the water into foam, and the hoary hair of the minstrel, standing upon the rock,

'Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air.'

The scene is full of agitation and dismay. Titian's noble landscape of 'St. Peter the martyr' is recalled to the mind. The sudden gust of wind, tossing over the robe of the Dominican, corresponds with the tumultuous attitude of the poet." P. 71.—*R.*

Page 169. *Loose his beard, and hoary hair.*

The image was taken from a well-known picture of Raphael, representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel. There are two of these paintings, both believed to be originals, one at Florence, the other in the Duke of Orleans' collection at Paris.—*Gray.*

Page 169. *To high-born Hoel's harp.*

Hoel is called *high-born*, being the son of Owen Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, by Finnog, an Irish damsel. He was one of his father's generals in his wars against the English, Flemings, and Normans, in South Wales; and was a famous bard, as his poems that are extant testify. See Evan. Spec. p. 26, 4to; and Jones, Relics, vol. ii. p. 36, where he is called the "*Princely* Bard," who says that he wrote eight pieces, five of which are translated by him in his interesting publication. The whole are given in Mr. Owen's translation, in Mr. Southey's Madoc, vol. ii. p. 162.

Page 169. *Cold is Cadwallo's tongue.*

Cadwallo and *Urien* are mentioned by Dr. Evans in his "Dissertatio de Bardis," p. 78, among those bards of whom no works remain. See account of *Urien's* death in Jones, Relics, i. p. 19. He is celebrated in the Triads, "as one of the three bulls of war." Taliessin dedicated to him upwards of twelve poems, and wrote an elegy on his death: he was slain by treachery in the year 560. Modred is, I suppose, the famous "Myrddin ab Morvryn," called Merlyn the Wild; a disciple of Taliessin, and bard to the Lord Gwenddolaw ab Ceidiaw. He fought under King Arthur in 542, at the battle of Camlau, and accidentally slew his own nephew. He was reckoned a truer prophet than his predecessor the great magician Merdhin Ambrose. See a poem of his called the "Orchard" in Jones, Relics, vol. i. p. 24. I suppose Gray altered the name "euphoniæ gratia;" as I can nowhere find a bard mentioned of the name of "Modred."

Page 170. *On dreary Arvon's shore they lie.*

The shores of Caernarvonshire opposite the isle of Anglesey.—*Gray.*

Page 170. *The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.*

Camden and others observe, that eagles used annually to build their aerie among the rocks of Snowdon, which from thence (as some think) were named by the Welsh Craigian-

eryri, or the crags of the eagles. At this day (I am told) the highest point of Snowdon is called the Eagle's Nest. That bird is certainly no stranger to this island, as the Scots, and the people of Cumberland, Westmoreland, &c. can testify: it even has built its nest upon the peak of Derbyshire. [See Willoughby's Ornithol. by Ray.]—*Gray.*

Page 170. *Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes.*

"As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit my sad heart."

Jul. Cæsar, act ii. sc. 1.—*Gray.*

Page 170. *And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.*

See the Norwegian ode (the Fatal Sisters) that follows.—*Gray.*

Page 171. *The shrieks of death, through Berkley's roof that ring.*

Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle. —*Gray.* See Drayton, Barons' Wars, v. lxvii.

"Berkley, whose fair seat hath been famous long,
Let thy sad *echoes shriek a deadly sound*
To the vast air: complain his grievous wrong,
And keep the blood that issued from his wound."

Page 171. *Shrieks of an agonizing king.*

This line of Gray is almost in the same words as Hume's description, vol. ii. p. 359: "The *screams* with which the *agonizing king* filled the castle."

Page 171. *She-wolf of France.*

Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous queen. —*Gray.*

This expression is from Shakspeare's Hen. VI. pt. III. act i. sc. 4: "*She-wolf of France,* but worse than wolves of France."

Page 171. *The scourge of heaven. What terrors round him wait!*

Triumphs of Edward the Third of France.—*Gray.*

Page 171. *Low on his funeral couch he lies.*

Death of that king, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress.—*Gray.*

Page 171. *Is the sable warrior fled?*

Edward the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.—*Gray.*

Page 171. *Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows.*

Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign. See Froissart and other contemporary writers.—*Gray.* See M. of Venice, act ii. s. 6. "How like a younker," &c. Spenser, Vision of the World's Vanity, "Looking far forth," &c. And Vision of Petrarch, c. ii. "After at sea a tall ship did appear," &c.

Page 172. *Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast.*

Richard the Second, as we are told by Archbishop Scroop and the confederate lords in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older writers, was starved to death. The story of his assassination by Sir Piers of Exon is of much later date.—*Gray.*

Page 172. *Heard ye the din of battle bray.*

Ruinous wars of York and Lancaster.—*Gray.*

Page 172. *Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame.*

Henry the Sixth, George Duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard Duke of York, &c., believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.—*Gray.*

Page 172. *Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame.*

Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown.—*Gray.*

Henry the Fifth.—*Gray.*

Page 172. *And spare the meek usurper's holy head.*

Henry the Sixth, very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.—*Gray.*

Page 172. *Above, below, the rose of snow.*

The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster. —*Gray.*

Page 172. *The bristled boar in infant-gore.*

The silver boar was the badge of Richard the Third; whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of the Boar.—*Gray.*

Page 173. *Half of thy heart we consecrate.*

Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington, Waltham, and other places.—*Gray.*

Page 173. *No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.*

It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and would return again to reign over Britain.

Page 173. *All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!*

Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied, that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island; which seemed to be accomplished in the house of Tudor.—*Gray.*

Page 174. *Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face.*

Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, ambassador of Poland, says, "And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestical deporture, than with the tartnesse of her princelie checkes."—*Gray.*

Page 174. *Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear.*

Taliessin, chief of the bards, flourished in the sixth century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen.—*Gray.* On his supposed sepulchre, see Wyndham, Tour in Wales, p. 100.

See Evans, Spec. p. 18, who says, "Taliessin's poems, on account of their great antiquity, are very obscure." There is a great deal of the Druidical cabala introduced in his works, especially about the transmigration of souls. Evans says that he had fifty of Taliessin's poems; and that many spurious ones are attributed to him. At p. 56, Evans has translated one of his odes, beginning "Fair Elphin, cease to weep;" comforting his friend on his bad success in the salmon-fishery. There is a fuller account of him in Jones, Relics, vol. i. p. 18, 21; vol. ii. p. 12, 19, 31, 34, where many of his poems are translated; and Pennant's Wales, vol. ii. p. 316; and Turner's Vind. of the ancient British Poems, p. 225, 237.

Page 174. *Fierce war, and faithful love.*

"Fierce wars and faithful loves shall moralize my song." Spenser, Proëme to the F. Q.—*Gray.*

Page 174. *In buskin'd measures move.*

Shakspeare.—*Gray.*

Page 174. *And distant warblings lessen on my ear.*

The succession of poets after Milton's time.—*Gray.*

Page 181. *And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn.*

Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon, Comte de St. Paul in France; of whom tradition says, that her husband Audemar de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, was slain at a tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the foundress of Pembroke College or Hall, under the name of Aula Mariæ de Valentia.—*Gray.*

Page 181. *And princely Clare.*

Elizabeth de Burg, Countess of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the Earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward the First. Hence the poet gives her the epithet of *princely*. She founded Clare Hall.—*Gray.*

Page 181. *And the paler rose.*

Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward the Fourth, hence called the paler rose, as being of the house of York. She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.—*Gray.*

Page 181. *And either Henry there.*

Henry the Sixth and Eighth. The former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity College.—*Gray.*

Page 182. *The venerable Margaret see.*

Countess of Richmond and Derby; the mother of Henry the Seventh, foundress of St. John's and Christ's Colleges.—*Gray.*

Page 183. *A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.*

The countess was a Beaufort, and married a Tudor: hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claims descent from both these families.—*Gray.*

Page 183. *The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings.*

Lord Treasurer Burleigh was chancellor of the University in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.—*Gray.*

Page 194. *Iron sleet of arrowy shower.*

"How quick they wheel'd, and, flying, behind them shot
Sharp *sleet of arrowy shower.*" Par. Reg. iii. 324.—*Gray.*

Page 194. *Hurtles in the darken'd air.*

"The noise of battle hurtled in the air."
Julius Cæsar, act ii. s. 2.—*Gray.*

Page 198. *That leads to Hela's drear abode.*

Hela, in the Edda, is described with a dreadful countenance, and her body half flesh colour, and half blue.—*Gray.*

Page 199. *The thrilling verse that wakes the dead.*

The original word is *Valgalldr;* from *Valr* mortuus, and *Galldr* incantatio.—*Gray.*

Page 201. *Once again my call obey.*

Women were looked upon by the Gothic nations as having a peculiar insight into futurity; and some there were that made profession of magic arts and divination. These travelled round the country, and were received in every house with great respect and honour. Such a woman bore the name of Volva Seidkona or Spakona. The dress of Thorbiorga, one of these prophetesses, is described at large in Eirik's Rauda Sogu, (apud Bartholin. lib. i. cap. iv. p. 688.) "She had on a blue vest spangled all over with

stones, a necklace of glass beads, and a cap made of the skin of a black lamb lined with white cat-skin. She leaned on a staff adorned with brass, with a round head set with stones; and was girt with a Hunlandish bolt, at which hung her pouch full of magical instruments. Her buskins were of rough calf-skin, bound on with thongs studded with knobs of brass, and her gloves of white cat-skin, the fur turned inwards," &c. They were also called *Fiolkyngi*, or *Fiolkunnug*, i. e. Multi-scia; and *Visindakona*, i. e. Oraculorum Mulier; *Nornir*, i. e. Parcæ.—*Gray*.

Page 298. *In Amorem Dormientem.*

Anthol. p. 332. Catullianam illam spirat mollitiem.—*Gray*.

Page 299. *From a Fragment of Plato.*

"Elegantissimum hercle fragmentum, quod sic Latinè nostro modo adumbravimus."—*Gray*.

THE END.

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